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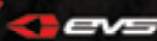
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COVER: Whitby's James Noble destroys a freshly-built FatCat Motoparc berm on his brand-new STR Honda
© Suttly

CONTENTS: Robbie Maddison playrides in the world's biggest MX sand pit at Glamis in California. It's a hard life...
© Chris Tedesco/Red Bull Photofiles

COMMENT

One of the most tragic single moments in my life came about five years ago when – admittedly slightly under the influence – I dropped an unopened bottle of champagne on my front doorstep. The bloody thing went off like a howitzer shell, showering me with 30 quid's worth of fine French fizz and completely and utterly ruining what was left of the evening. One small slip and everything went tits-up and even now – many, many bottles of champagne down the line – I can still feel the mental anguish, still hear my harrowing howl echoing down the street, still see my neighbours rushing out to discover what new disaster had befallen the stumblebum next door!

What, you may well ask, has that little shameful confession got to do with dirt bikes? Well bear with me for a moment because there are parallels that can be drawn between my boozed-up butter-fingers and the fantastic – but so often fickle – world of off-road racing. Take, for instance, the recent happenings Stateside that have done for Mike Alessi's season. One moment he's the most dominant force in AMA motocross, the next he's nursing a broken kneecap and staring down the barrel of a long lay-off. One moment I'm minutes away from popping the cork on a chilled bottle of Veuve Clicquot, the next I'm on my champagne-sodden knees – Platoon style – howling at life's injustices.

The difference is that while I'll never, ever attempt to unlock my front door again with a bottle tucked under my arm, riders will continue to crash out and see their dreams of glory shattered by a momentary misjudgement or a freak mechanical failure or just pure and simple bad luck. Stefan Everts, Ricky Carmichael, James Stewart, Josh Coppins, Dave Thorpe etc etc etc – the bigger they are the harder they fall and no-one, no matter how good, is immune to injury. At this precise moment DBR columnists Billy MacKenzie and Stephen Sword are both nursing poorly paws while Gordon Crockard is just getting back in the saddle after coming close to checking out the great gig in the sky.

Okay, I think by now we've established that motocross – and enduro for that matter – can be a risky business so while weekend warriors everywhere may envy the lifestyles the pros lead it's worth bearing in mind what James Noble has to say on the subject later on in this month's mag. James is one of a growing number of GP-calibre riders who have forsaken the world championship for the promise of better paydays a lot closer to home where although the risks aren't hugely reduced the increased rewards make racing much more worthwhile.

A lack of prize money and hefty entry fees have transformed the world of GP racing and the days when a solid professional could eke out a living or, at the very least, cover his costs are gone for good. So for the likes of James and Carl Nunn a new series like the Red Bull Pro Nationals which offers good prize money plus – just as importantly – great national exposure for valuable sponsors is priceless. It's an interesting, thought-provoking feature which has certainly made me reconsider my views on what previously I would have said was possibly too busy a domestic calendar...

And while new series are giving MX riders a chance to extend their careers, a relatively new sport is doing the same for trials riders. Extreme enduros are being dominated by former feet-up men. David Knight – minus Beemer – along with Taddy Blazusiak are the big two names in the sport and both come with a solid trials background. It's a sport that we're bloody brilliant at, a fact confirmed by a quick glimpse at the results from the Erzberg hare scramble when Graham Jarvis finished runner-up, Ben and Dan Hemingway both went top 10 and Mark Jackson, Andrew Reeves and Martin Craven made it six Brit trials men in the top 20. And the best trials rider of the lot – 12-time world champ Dougie Lampkin – was running second on his 450cc Beta bus when heat exhaustion plus a rock to the napper ended his event one checkpoint shy of the finish.

Sean



© David Seearce

Knighter's straight back on the gas Stateside to claim his first big win of '09

NEWSHAWND!

DEPUTY DAWG'S DIRTY DELIVERY OF OFF-ROAD NEWS...

Fast Frenchie Marvin Musquin's even hotter news than normal at the moment as the MX2 world championship leader, who sensationally quit his NGS Honda ride to jump ship to the factory KTM squad, might just be headed right back where he started the year if the French legal system has its way.

Between the Latvian and Swedish rounds of the series the super-skinny Frenchman was summoned to Havre's High Court to hear the decision that he'll have to race a Honda for the rest of the year or pay a hefty fine. Musquin appealed against the original ruling and as DBR went to press the motocross world awaited the outcome. Keep an eye on www.dirtbikerider.com for the full story...

If you've been regularly looking at the DBR website which we know over 47,500 of you have this month then you'll be well aware that David Knight quit the BMW team after a half-year of unsatisfactory results with the Bavarian bike builders in the WEC.

With nothing else lined up the Manx man mountain headed Stateside, paid for a 450 Kawasaki from a local dealer then set it up to go woods racing. Entering the final round of the GNCC before it breaks for the summer, Knighter –

who is the defending champion in that series – blitzed the field by over five minutes to take his first major win this year. There was more good news for the Brits too as Jason 'Ratboy' Thomas took a well deserved win in the XC2 class for 250cc four-stroke machines.

On returning from America DK was met at Heathrow Airport by Kawasaki Europe's race planning manager Steve Guttridge so it's looking likely that a relationship between the two-time world and GNCC champion and the green team will be forged real soon.

Knighter and Marv are not the only riders to jump ship this month as MVR-D Suzuki's James Noble also does the same. Following on from the Hawkstone Park round of the domestic series, Noble now rides for Steve Turner's Proppa dot com sponsored Honda squad and looks right at home on his new machinery. That's not really surprising considering that MVR-D tune the team's suspension and motors and should know the set-up James requires. There appears to be no ill feeling following the split and everyone concerned is just cracking right on with it...

Now for something we heard about recently and although we can't absolutely guarantee that it



James Noble's joined...



...Steve Turner's band of brothers



"Now where's me bloody gnome gone?"

WHERE'SZACH?

FIND ZACH OSBORNE AND WIN A PAIR OF TCX PRO 2 BOOTS

Meet Zach Osborne! The UTAG Yamaha speedster's been out injured for a fair part of the season so you won't have seen him on the track for a bit – but if you can find him hiding within the pages of this month's mag it could be your lucky day...

Take a long, loving look at the Young American and then try and find his handsome head superimposed onto someone else's body somewhere in this issue. If you can then you could win a pair of top-of-the-range TCX Pro 2 boots courtesy of Nevis Marketing

Once you've worked out where's Zach you need to text the word **DBRZACH** followed by a space, the page number, another space and then your name and postcode to **81800**. You'll receive a text back confirming your entry to this competition.*

Entries close on **August 6** with the first correct answer chosen at random getting the boots (don't worry, we'll give the winner a bell to get their size)...

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Marv Musquin – facing a legal battle to stay orange



GOLDENPAD

WIN A PAIR OF RENTHAL HANDLEBARS

Mars Bars, Milky Bars, Dime Bars, Boost Bars – all mighty tasty treats but all about as much use as a Curly Wurly if bolted onto the triple clamps of your favourite steed when you hit that huge double fully tapped in fifth. No, the bars you need are handlebars – good job then we've got another pair of Renthals up for grabs this month.

Have a close look at our pic of this golden Renthal bar pad, then flick through this month's mag and find the full pic we've taken it from. Once you've found it simply text the word **DBRRENT** followed by a space, the page number it appears on, another space and then your name and postcode to **81800**. You'll receive a text back confirming your entry to this competition.*

Entries close on **August 6** with the first correct entry chosen at random getting a pair of Renthal handlebars of their choice...

definitely happened we're gonna tell you about it anyway... At the recent Erzberg hare scramble 12-time world trials champion Dougie Lampkin MBE – who had performed brilliantly to get his 450cc Beta on the front row during the Iron Road prologue – was running in second place in the tortuous race ahead of fellow Brit Paul 'Hansel' Bolton when he got a little hot under the collar.

Obviously dehydrated and suffering with a little bit of heat exhaustion – as well as the after effects of a high-speed get off that saw him sliding underneath his factory four-stroke for a fair few feet – Dougie was allegedly spotted wandering around in the cool Austrian woods removing his Alpinestars racewear shouting 'Where's me gnome? Where's me gnome?' until dad Mart rocked up and demanded that he get back on his bike and finish the race. Dougie gave it his best shot but fell foul of the stupendously technical Carl's Diner section just a little bit later and had to call it quits.

The story doesn't end there though because as Dougie was recovering at the trailside a rock flicked up by a fellow competitor's bike crashed down on the Silsdenonian's skull giving the champ a pretty serious concussion. In the end Dougie was airlifted to safety and although his gnome remains at large –

as far as we're aware – he seems to have recovered well, notching up some great results in the following WTC rounds and celebrating first-born son Alfie's fourth birthday in fine style with a special shindig in Andorra.

Lampkin's Beta team-mate Jeroni Fajardo took his first victory in the WTC to win the Andorran trial. Toni Bou still leads the series despite only finishing third at the last two rounds and the Spanish Montesa star currently sits on a 12-point lead in the championship ahead of countryman Adam Raga with just two rounds remaining. Lampkin's sixth with James Dabill right there in seventh and Michael Brown a safe 10th.

International motocross returns to Farleigh Castle on **September 5/6** as the Southern Twinshock club host the 2009 MXdN Nations Cup. Pre-65, pre-74, twinshock and evo class riders from around the globe will battle it out at the famous circuit over the weekend that's being kindly sponsored by Britain's #1 off-road bike manufacturer CCM who'll be unveiling the production version of their MX race bike at this event for the very first time.

Top riders scheduled to make an appearance include Farleigh legends Dave Thorpe, Jacky Vimond, Graham Noyce, Pete Mathia, Neil Prince,

the Karsmakers clan, Herbert Schmitz, Mats Nilsson, Eric Geboers and that Dick Dastardly type character of '80s MX Dickie Dye. The entertainment's not limited to the infamous track either as live bands, a traditional cider bar and a whole lot more will be going off over the weekend. Believe it or not Farleigh Castle's exactly where it was when it was last used for top flight international motocross some 20 years ago – that's just off the A36 near Bath. Call Phil Steadman for an entry on **0117 057 0997**.

Before that thrilling event though you've got the Big Air Jam on July 15 at Margham Park in South Wales, **Dirt 3-2-1** at FatCat Motoparc on **July 17/18/19** – see next page for full preview – and the Red Bull Pro Nats at Canada Heights the same weekend followed by the sixth round of the British motocross championship at Foxhill one week later. Also looming on the horizon is the big FMX event of the summer – the Red Bull X-Fighters – which comes to Battersea Power Station in London on August 22. For more information on that event get online at www.redbullxfighters.com

And for everything else that's dirt bike related check us out online at www.dirtbikerider.com



Red Bull X-Fighters – coming to London





90 RACING MXC

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DIRT3-2-1!

DON'T MISS THE OFF-ROAD EVENT OF THE YEAR!

After what feels like centuries of intense planning and scheming the **DBR, T+MX and FatCat Motoparc**-promoted family event of the year is finally here. **Dirt 3-2-1** is set to rock the whole of South Yorkshire on **July 17/18/19** as the all-encompassing off-road sports festival lands at FatCat Motoparc in Armthorpe for a weekend of fun, frolics and funanigans in a dirt bike style.

We've got motocross, endurocross and supercross races lined up, loads of practice sessions all weekend long, a ladies-only trial, a massive trade village with exhibitors a-plenty, brand-new bike displays, a bouncy castle and slide, food stalls, ice cream, a licensed bar and even the opportunity for newcomers to off-road sport to give motocross a go in a safe and controlled environment thanks to our good buddies at Big X.

Situated merely 30 seconds from **junction 4** of the **M18**, **Dirt 3-2-1** is the perfect way to spend the first weekend of the school summer holidays. Admission on Saturday and Sunday – Friday is **FREE** – costs just **£5** per person with accompanied under 10s coming in for nowt. For more information about this awesome event log on to **www.dirt321.co.uk** or call the event hotline on **01524 834030**.

PRACTICE WITH THE PROS

Fridays are all about having fun and seeing as though there's nowt quite as fun as riding a perfectly prepped track with your mates then that's what we'll be doing all day long, so blag a day off work and come do some riding with us.

Joining us on the day we'll have pro riders from the STR Honda, DB Racing Honda, LPE Kawasaki and Relentless Suzuki teams plus a couple more who we're waiting to hear from. All the pro riders who rock up on the day are willing to give you tips and advice as well as sign an autograph or two before showing you the fast way around the awesome FatCat race track that will be used for Sunday's Doodson Insurance-sponsored race event. So come ride for giggles or to eke out an advantage on the rest of the pack – whatever your reason you'll be more than welcome...

SUPERCROSS

After Friday's laidback practice sessions the action heats up in the Dirt 3-2-1 race arena on Saturday morning with some scintillating supercross action. The course for the Pidcock Motorcycles Supercross has been especially engineered for this event by FatCat's resident track builder Neil Mason and recently received a big thumbs up from STR Honda's James Noble and Jordan Rose who spun a lap or two around the 50-second circuit for the DBR cameras.

There will be races for everyone from six-year-olds on autos to professional standard adults so the action's gonna come thick and fast through the daytime qualifiers as riders battle it out for those precious places in the Saturday evening Main Events as well as the trophies and prize money that are on offer too!

ENDUROCROSS

As well as hosting the SX Main Events in a floodlit show that starts at 7pm, Saturday night at Dirt 3-2-1 will have some exciting Michelin Endurocross race action that should see an ongoing grudge match between 12-time world trials champion Dougie Lampkin and five-time British champion Graham Jarvis settled once and for all as they both try to gain an elusive edge in their new chosen sport of choice – extreme enduro.

A mammoth race circuit has been built in preparation for this battle royale that features raucous rocks, lethal logs, terrible tyres and precipitous pipes as well as the odd supercross style jump that'll really sort the men from the boys in an exciting series of heats, semis and finals.

Although it's Lampkin and Jarvis who headline the Saturday night event there are more than a few pro class wildcards who could upset the apple cart including Paul Bolton, Justin 'The Daddy' Wilson, the Hemingway brothers Dan and Ben as well as our very own Angry Geoff Walker who'll want a major slice of the £1000 prize fund that's up for grabs.

And it's not just professional riders who'll be taking to the endurocross track as courageous clubmen will be battling it out for pride and trophies too during the exciting, action-packed floodlit show that'll go on late into the night.

MOTOCROSS

Sunday sees Dirt 3-2-1 return to the roots of off-road sport with the Doodson Insurance Motocross run by Yorkshire-based ORPA club 90 Racing MXC going off on the famous FatCat Motoparc race track. Once again there'll be classes to suit all – youths and adults – with trophies for the top 10 in all classes as well as great prize money for the Pro class.

NOVICE EXPERIENCE

Cheshire-based charmers Big X will be providing Dirt 3-2-1 showgoers with a novice experience for all new riders aged 13 upwards who'd like to try out the sport of motocross for the first time. Following Big X's tradition of teaching beginner riders in a safe environment the novice experience will take place in its own enclosed arena with all safety equipment, machinery and coaching provided so all you have to do is book your place on the day then rock up with a good attitude and enjoy your session!

The machinery Big X have chosen to show showgoers the ins and outs of our sport on are the excellent SMC range of dirt bikes. While the SMC YBs – that come in 150 and 250cc sizes – are never going to go out and win world championship motocross or enduro events they are handy tools for the pure novice and a perfect starter weapon for anyone's off-road career. Designed in America and then manufactured in China, the SMC YB150 and 250 have a rugged lightweight chassis with tuneable suspension, disc brakes and crisp-shifting five-speed, four-stroke air-cooled motors that deliver smooth and linear power.

FANCY RACING?

There are just a handful of places left in the motocross, supercross and endurocross races so if you fancy battling it out for our cool Dirt 3-2-1 trophies or part of the £2500 prize fund you need to get on the phone right now and book your place by calling Lynsey at 90 Racing MXC on **07725 231104**.



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WIN THIS BIKE!

Visitors to Dirt 3-2-1 can win this brand new SMC YB150 dirt bike worth over £1500 and here's how to go about it...

Simply tear off this rip-strip™, put a cross in the box next to your answer, fill out the personal info and drop your completed entry into the special receptacle at the Big X Novice Experience Arena. On Sunday afternoon (July 19) we'll make the draw with the first correct entry drawn completely at random winning the bike. And what's more, you don't even have to be here on Sunday to collect your prize – we'll deliver it free-of-charge anywhere in the UK!

Q: Who's running the Novice Experience at Dirt 3-2-1?

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Is it:

- A) ☐ Big Al
B) ☐ Big X
C) ☐ Big Tony
D) ☐ Big Mac and fries

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AMCAUPDATE

O'LEARY AND DUNHAM LEAD AT HALFWAY MARK

Words and photos by Mike Wood

Four rounds down and with the 2009 AMCA MX championships hitting the midway point Brad O'Leary and Lee Dunham lead the MX1 and MX2 title chases. With podium placings in the opening three outings, O'Leary holds a narrow five-point advantage as Ben Saunders closes in fast in MX1 while Dunham sits a slightly more comfortable 43 points better off than reigning champ Phil Mercer in MX2.

After the opening two rounds at Culham and Bevercotes resulted in overall victories for fast-starting Charlie Hollis and O'Leary, the MX1 championship has again shown just what an ultra-competitive series it is and later meetings at Cleobury and Kerry saw AMCA debutant Brad Turner and Ben Saunders take the wins. But for a series of falls, Turner has already displayed enough speed, strength and sheer determination to suggest that although he currently only sits fourth in the championship table he could well be a serious title contender come October.

After finishing 2008 in fine form Dunham has picked up where he left off, winning the opening two MX2 rounds at Culham and Bevercotes before finishing as runner-up at both Cleobury and Kerry behind reigning MX2 champ Phil Mercer.

With expected front runner Lee Payne out of action after breaking two bones in his back during a practice session, Matt Porter, Sean Frayne, Scott Mathia, Mark Hooley and young Luke Spence appear to be the lads most likely to provide the main challenge to the leading duo at the remaining rounds.

SERIESSTANDINGS

MX1 >>>

1	Brad O'Leary	ProppaGear4 KTM	554 points
2	Ben Saunders	Delkevic Kawasaki	549
3	Charlie Hollis	Proppa Honda	531
4	Brad Turner	Ride MX Yamaha	485
5	David Campbell	Corby MX Kawasaki	459
6	James Russell	Frol/Homer Racing Honda	443
7	Tim Truman	Doodson Suzuki	431
8	Jamie Powell	KTM	419
9	Clinton Barrs	Delkevic Kawasaki	357
10	Richard Meakin	Proppa Honda	330

MX2 >>>

1	Lee Dunham	MotoXtreme Kawasaki	597 points
2	Phil Mercer	Delkevic Kawasaki	554
3	Matt Porter	Select Homes Honda	532
4	Sean Frayne	Honda	457
5	Scott Mathia	Doodson Suzuki	390
6	Luke Spence	KTM	372
7	Mark Hooley	Craig's Motorcycles KTM	350
8	Shane Holmes	Ride MX KTM	347
9	Paul Neale	Kawasaki	333
10	Carl Benjamin	Thornbury MX Kawasaki	331



GORDON CROCKARD

COMEBACK CROCK!

LESS THAN FOUR MONTHS AFTER HIS NEAR FATAL CRASH AT HAWKSTONE THE PRIDE OF ULSTER'S BACK ON TRACK...

Words and photo by Gordon Crockard

I am very, very pleased to be able to open my column this month with the news that I returned to racing at the John Donnelly Memorial against Ireland's leading riders. I competed in that race after 10 days riding at my own practice track and the event went really well. I was fastest in my group in practice and went into the races feeling happy that I could get good results.

I screwed up the start (it's been a while) and came round the first half-lap in around 10th or so. On that first half of the lap JMB – also known as Jonnie McBride – crashed/was taken down right in front of me and I ran into him as I had nowhere else to go. I hit the ground hard enough and my bike got thumped by a few riders coming through. Bar JMB I was last and set off to catch back up as far as I could and I got to eighth in the short 15-minute race so that was okay. For race two I knew what to do different off the line and holeshot the field and put my head down to try and pull away. I fended off the attack from Stuey 162ey (Stuart Edmonds) and won the race. It was great to put that win on the board as the first race wasn't what I wanted.

In race three I was beat to the first turn only by Gary Gibson. So while holding second place I was planning how to pass him and made a mistake and stalled. This let Tommy Merton pass me and I now had to try and get past two guys if I wanted to win. I got by Tommy but not Gary so I finished second for third overall on the day which has provided me with an indication of where I am currently at.

I will race next Wednesday again in the second round of the Carrick club's evening motocross series. Then I will be at Lyng for my first British championship round of the year. I'm really looking forward to finding out how I will be at that level of event.

When I ride the bike I feel good and I've no pain or fear issues. I do have a lot less strength than I had before I got hurt but I'm aware of how strong I was at that time. It is just a case of continuing with riding and training to let the body get fitter and stronger. It will come with time. As I write this I have been back riding the bike for two weeks now. At first I could only last for about eight to 10 minutes – my speed was good but I just had no stamina to last longer than that. Now that's much better and improving all the time as I keep the programme going. Pain-wise the only time I feel it is in the morning when I wake up. My back is very stiff and sore and I have to stretch for a while to loosen up.

I have only ever raced at Lyng in the early part of the year when the dirt is normally wetter due to the end of the winter rain. This period of the year is very dry and I think the ground will be different due to that so I'm expecting it to be faster and more powdery sand than I've experienced at Lyng before.

Anyway, I'm not too concerned and I'm looking forward to it no matter. It's been nice talking...

Sent from my BlackBerry® wireless device





WIN! WIN! WIN!

FUEL GAMES UP FOR GRABS!

Quite possibly the hottest new racing game release in the entire history of racing game releases, according to the Codemasters webby Fuel promises to revolutionise multi-terrain, multi-vehicle racing – but don't take their word for it, find out for yourself in our great competition.

Upstairs in DBR editorial we've not had a chance to check out Fuel for ourselves as the review copy went walkies as soon as Phil 'Fast Fingers' Armitage laid his sticky mitts on it but the blurb on the official website – to be read aloud in a husky film-trailer voiceover stylee – sure sounds good...

'In a fictional present, vast swathes of the United States have been ravaged by the extreme effects of accelerated global warming – tornados, brush fires, hurricanes and tsunamis have driven people from their homes leaving huge areas of America abandoned.

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We've got two copies of the game to give away this month – one for the X-Box 360 and one for a PS3 – and to be in with a chance of winning all you need to do is tell us which of these songs by The Prodigy concerns a type of fuel...

Is it:

- A: Breathe
- B: Diesel Power
- C: Voodoo People
- D: Break and Enter

Think you know the answer? Hook up to www.dirtbikerider.com where you need to follow the competition link, type in your answer, fill out the fields (remember to specify whether you want an X-Box 360 or a PS3 version of the game) and hit transmit. Entries close on **August 6** with the first two correct entries – one X-Box 360, one PS3 – chosen totally at random getting a copy of Fuel...

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STEPHEN SWORD ONCE BITTEN...

A ROGUE CREEPY CRAWLY GETS A GOBFUL OF HAGGIS AND SCREWS UP ANOTHER MONTH FOR THE BRITISH CHAMPIONSHIP LEADER

Words by Stephen Sword Photo by Suttu

Well, yet another month full of difficulties! I have been trying desperately to get on a roll and feel comfortable on the bike and also working hard on trying to build my confidence back so I can start getting the results I know I can achieve again. At the moment it's just not happening but, hey, I will sort it out.

The week before France I got an insect bite and somehow it got infected which caused a lot of swelling over my arm and leg. It was extremely itchy and seemed to be spreading so I was put on antibiotics for that. So the weekend of France I was not on top form as I was unable to sleep with the itching – it was horrible. On the Sunday I had two shocking rides and in both the races I crashed so I came home gutted once again.

When I got back from France I seemed to live at the doc's – I went four times in one week! They gave me some steroid cream and, just my luck at the moment, I had an allergic reaction to the cream and it spread all over my body. I could not believe it! I went out to Holland to ride and test to get ready for Hawkstone and while I was out there I saw yet another doctor. He gave me some different tablets to stop the itching. I felt like I was going mad – I was having no sleep and my body was raw from scratching. At this point I have to say I was getting grumpy so good luck to everyone who had to spend time in my company! While I was out in Holland I rode at Lommel for two days which is deep sand – my favourite! But it was good practice ready for the GP there...

The weekend of Hawkstone I was really tired and I found myself in the camper talking to Jodie at 1am on race day as I was still unable to sleep due to the itching. She had Ayrton in the bottom bed with her while I slept on my own up the front end. Due to me not being able to sleep she stayed awake with me even though I know she was so tired with the baby so thanks gorgeous! I was not sure how the racing was going to go but it turned out to be more of a positive day and I had two okay races. First race I was third so not happy about that. We made some changes to the bike and the second race I won. I did manage to extend my lead in the British championship so I just need to stay consistent over the coming

races and use my head. I took Ayrton on the podium with me and he slept through it so he must feel at home on the top step!

Germany! Bloody Germany! The last time I was at this track I busted my leg up three years ago. Jodie and Ayrton came for a bit of support which was cool and it was his first time on a plane. He was so good and slept the whole way. The funny thing about this track is that I actually like it – weird considering I had a big crash in second practice on Saturday which resulted in a broken hand but I was still okay to ride even though it was pretty swollen.

On the Sunday my shock broke in the first race but I carried on riding and was 18th. In the second race I went down at the start of the race onto my hand so I had to pull in as the pain was too much. I couldn't believe what a s**t day I had and then on our way home it poured with rain so our flight was delayed. We ended up not getting home until gone 3am but Ayrton was amazing and we didn't even know we had him all weekend.

On the Monday I went to the hospital to get my hand x-rayed as it was badly swollen and I have a hairline fracture under the knuckle. This meant I missed Latvia and I hate watching the racing at home in front of the TV. All I want to do is get on my bike and start riding again. I am going to do everything I can do to turn this year around – I need to work the best I can with what I have for the rest of the season.

I also went to Foxhill for the press day. It's only five minutes from my home and I have to say it's one of the best tracks I've raced on – it's a shame it no longer has GPs there. I was gutted though as I was unable to ride on it with my hand the way it was but it looked good. I can't wait to race there in a few weeks.

Well, I'm going to keep training hard and get back on a bike as soon as I can. Just want to say thanks to all of you that always support me through my ups and downs.

I've had enough of the downs, time for the ups!
Braaaaap #7



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NEVILLE BRADSHAW

pro probe

THIS MONTH'S PRO GETTING A GOOD PROBING IS DB RACING HONDA'S NEVILLE BRADSHAW WHO'S AT THE WRONG END OF OUR CUSTOMS STYLE QUESTIONING COURTESY OF DBR READERS. IF YOU'D JUST STEP THIS WAY SIR...

Words and photo by JP O'Connell

Q: Do you have more fun riding motocross or supercross?
Ian Rook, Southend

A: "I really enjoy riding supercross because it seems to come real easy to me, I think growing up racing in South Africa where the tracks are mainly hardpack and supercross style helped with that. However, I would say that there's more satisfaction in doing well in motocross. A lot more work goes into getting that done. So I would say supercross is more fun but motocross is a lot more satisfying."

Q: Are you content to ride mainly in the UK or are you wanting to get a full-time GP ride?
Martin Wells, Newport

A: "I enjoy racing in the UK. I would love to race full-time GPs again though. I really like the way things run there, everything is always well organised and run on time, also riding with the fastest racers every weekend definitely brings your speed up. The tracks are good and it's a long series. Unfortunately, the way things have gone it's a really expensive task that not a lot of UK-based teams can afford to do. The British championship is also very professional and the closest we get to a GP."

Q: Did you move to the UK from SA as the motocross opportunities are better here or did you move over with your family?
Dave Gould, Birmingham

A: "It was always my goal as a kid to do well in SA then come to Europe and do well. I always heard of guys like Paul Cooper, Ryan Hunt and Dennis Hewartson racing in England and doing well. I thought that sounds really cool doing something different and taking a chance on a dream so I ended up coming over in '03 and am still here now. My dad already lived in Ireland and my mum has recently also moved over there which is good but I came over solely for the MX."

Q: It's looking good for you in the British championship at the moment – what would it mean to you if you could bag that?
Stuart Mills, Poole

A: "Man that would be awesome! At the beginning of the season I was shooting for top three but have realised I have a shot at it – my speed and fitness are good and we got the bikes going great so I'm looking forward to the second half of the season. Myself and everyone around me have put a lot into it and it would be good to reward them with a title. Guess I just got to keep working hard and fight every moto and see where that leaves me after the second moto at Landrake."

Q: You've ridden and had success on both MX1 and MX2 bikes. Which do you prefer and why?
Matt Roberts, Newcastle

A: "I enjoy riding both bikes. I think if I had to have another full season on the 450 I could get some good results. I really enjoy riding the 250 though – I can throw it around a lot more and try to ride it to its limit which is fun. Looking back I think one of the biggest mistakes I made was going up to MX1 in '05, I just got the ball rolling in MX2 with a podium at the last round in '04 – I should of stayed one more year in MX2 I think."

Q: What do you get up to when you're not riding/training?
Rachel Taylor, Bexley

A: "When I'm not riding or training I like to go watch films, hit some golf balls at the driving range, play Guitar Hero, go to the casino, listen to music, ride trials bikes and BMX and hang out with my mates and family."

Q: Your fellow countrymen Tyla Ratray, Greg Albertyn and Grant Langston all left the GPs for a shot at American glory. Is this something you can see yourself doing in the future?
Andrew Dodds, Salisbury

A: "I'm not sure if that's the way to go for me. I have had long chats with Paul Cooper about that subject. I'm sure the racing and lifestyle out there is great and I almost went and raced there for a season in '07 but the team folded at the last minute. I'm going out there for the first time in January next year for pre-season testing and I would love to do a few SX races out there before the MX starts here. I've worked hard to build up what I have here in the UK and it would be like starting over again in a way."

Q: In a typical week how often do you practice and train?
Sara Phelps, Newquay

A: "A typical week for me is Monday I do a recovery cycle, Tuesday is a swim and rest, Wednesday is riding doing motos, Thursday is riding, doing interval and technique training or any testing, Friday is spinning class and swim, Saturday off, Sunday race day."

Q: As you are not currently campaigning the GP series do you have to work a 'normal' job to make ends meet?
Damian White, Shropshire

A: "No, I ride full-time. I race the British, Red Bull Nationals, KWS and British Open to make my money up through prize money. I think it's actually possible to make more money racing in England than GPs."

Q: Is there a downside to riding motocross for a living?
Jack Burrows, Ipswich

A: "It's mostly positive being able to ride for a living, I mean it's hard work but getting results is rewarding. I guess injuries are a downside to the racing, then coming back too early just to make money to live isn't so cool. I did that in '07 when I hurt my knee and MX wasn't very fun that year. It's definitely something you got to make the most of while you can. Also listening to your body and not doing too much or too little can be a hard job."

Q: If you could win only one title in your career which would it be – MX1, MX2, AMA Nats, SX etc – and why?
David Lant, Cambridge

A: "I would say MX1 world champion has to take the cake. You have to be a man to go 15 rounds of the world championship against the best in the world, doing two 40-minute motos every weekend on a 450. To come out on top of that you're doing good."

Q: At the end of the season are you able to do a Ricky Hatton and eat what you want for a few weeks?
Dan Pamplin, Dundee

A: "Yeah, the end of the season is great. Especially riding the 250F you got to try keep the weight down, then after the des Nations you can eat and drink whatever you like until training starts mid-November again. It's good to let some steam off after a long season and also there's something to work off on the long off-season sessions."

Q: In England some of 'our' best sportsmen have been adopted from other countries – Lennox Lewis and Greg Rusedski spring to mind! Are you now a UK citizen and if not will you apply?
Sam Townsend, Exeter

A: "Yes, I am a UK citizen. My mum and dad are Irish so I was able to get a British passport which makes things a lot easier for the racing and travelling because with the SA passport I had to get a visa every time I went abroad."



PRO PROBE

ANTONIO CAIROLI >>>

Next month will see double MX2 world champ and current MX1 points leader Tony Cairoli step up to the plate and field your questions so flash up the old ZX Spectrum and get those questions off to the normal address – dbproprobe@googlemail.com – if you want a chance to win a pair of his signed goggles...

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FOR OUR LATEST TEST OF TESTOSTERONE WE'VE GONE FULL-FACTORY AS WE QUIZ RED BULL KTM'S GP-WINNING PAIRING...

Words by JP O'Connell photos by ktmimages.com

This month's man action comes courtesy of Red Bull KTM's Max Nagl and Rui Goncalves who we wrestled to the floor before cupping their hairy boys in our hot hands and demanding they answer a list of bizarre questions...

DBR: Who would you like to play you in a film of your life?

MN: "Someone who is funny but not in a clown way – maybe James Bond but without all of the action!"

RG: "Good question! I think Eddie Murphy as he is very funny and I always like to be having fun."

DBR: When did you last clean an air filter?

MN: "Back in 2003 when I was still riding 125s."

RG: "Whoa, that would have been in '07 when I had a practice bike back at my house in Portugal."

DBR: Could you check your own valve clearances?

MN: "No, on a two-stroke I could change pistons but on the four-strokes I know nothing."

RG: "No, no chance. I know that they are in the engine somewhere!"

DBR: Have you ever eaten anything that you have killed?

MN: "Ummm...no, never."

RG: "Yes, I have been out shooting with my uncle and we ate the birds we shot."

DBR: How many bones have you broken?

MN: "Altogether or just this year? In total it's 17."

RG: "Three – wrist, forearm and collarbone."

DBR: Can you eat spaghetti without a spoon?

MN: "Oh yes."

RG: "Yep, I don't eat much spaghetti but I can do this."

DBR: Something you eat that you know you shouldn't?

MN: "I like McDonalds, not every week but probably every other – and chocolate and sweets. I know it's not good but they are so good!"

RG: "Nothing. I have a diet from my trainer that I respect 100 per cent."

DBR: Do you own a pair of slippers?

MN: "Yes [laughing]! Two pairs actually!"

RG: "No."

DBR: "You're in second and on the leader's rear wheel – do you take him out in the last corner for the win?"

MN: "No, I would definitely try to pass him but I would never be thinking to take him out."

RG: "I would just try to make a safe pass, not take him

out. I mean sometimes there are race incidents but you don't want to get yourself disqualified."

DBR: What is the highlight of your career so far?

MN: "Last year when I was winning at Faenza."

RG: "My first GP win in Valkenswaard which was followed by my home GP win a week later."

DBR: What car do you drive?

MN: "It's an Audi A4."

RG: "At the moment I have an Opel Vivaro van."

DBR: And if money were no object?

MN: "An Audi RS6."

RG: "Maybe the Ferrari 430."

DBR: Have you ever blamed a poor result on a non-existent mechanical issue?

MN: "No, never, it is always me. Sometimes if there has been a small problem on the bike I will say it's been me."

RG: "No, I am always honest to myself. If there is something wrong then there is a reason, no excuses."

DBR: Have you ever been arrested?

MN: "No."

RG: "No but I would like to have a look around in a prison for a day just to see what it's all about – not in the shower though!"

DBR: If you could change anything about yourself what would it be?

MN: "That I had less respect for the other riders, then I could maybe stick the bike in a bit harder."

RG: "I feel good with myself!"

DBR: What's the most embarrassing thing you've done while drunk.

MN: "I don't really drink and have only been drunk about three times in my life. On one of those times I lost the ability to talk – actually, I also couldn't walk!"

RG: "I have done so many stupid things while drunk that I couldn't really pick one out, I've probably forgotten the best."

DBR: If you could meet any person who would it be?

MN: "Michael Schumacher."

RG: "Lance Armstrong."

DBR: Do you have any fears or phobias?

MN: "Not really."

RG: "I don't really like wild animals, I've been to South Africa and there are some really bad boys out there. I'm not too keen on heights either."

DBR: If you were shipwrecked on an island what three things would you want with you?

MN: "A bike for sure, a girlfriend and some books to read."

RG: "I would have a beautiful girl – actually, I'd have three beautiful girls!"

DBR: What's your favourite film?

MN: "The Day After Tomorrow."

RG: "I like comedy so it would probably be something like Bruce Almighty."

DBR: Where's your favourite place on earth?

MN: "Where I live now, Lommel in Belgium."

RG: "Portugal – I spend a long time away and I love going back."

DBR: What's your most prized possession?

MN: "That would be my car."

RG: "My parents."

DBR: Have you ever been in a fight and if so did you win?

MN: "Yes, on the motocross track! Two years ago in the German champs with Marcus Schiffer he let his bike run into me and took us both down. I was so pissed I got up and hit him, then he hit me before I ran off to my bike to get started again."

RG: "Yes, not lately though."

DBR: Which was the best race you've been in?

MN: "Faenza last year."

RG: "Portugal this year was absolutely awesome."

DBR: Is winning a race better than sex?

MN: "Hmmm, my girlfriend will read this... To win a GP overall I would say yes."

RG: "That's really tough, I'd like to win the race and have sex straight after, then I can let you know. Are you able to arrange something?"

DBR: How do you have your steak?

MN: "Medium to well."

RG: "Well done."

DBR: Blonde or brunette?

MN: "Blonde."

RG: "It doesn't matter."

DBR: Something about yourself that nobody else knows?

MN: "I am crazy about my car. I like to pimp it and keep it as clean – inside and out – as when it was new."

RG: "I am a keen jetskier."





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The supersized 9800 was made to move with oversized, off-road wheels and a retractable pullman handle, but its protected compartments appeal to anyone who travels hard and heavy. The redesigned 9800 powers up protection with the aid of the new SLED (Structural Load Equalizing Deck) system, while providing padded protection for unlimited gear.





Stuart Edmonds pushes the TM thumper to 12th in the opening MX1 race at Hawkstone

IRISH CREAM!

STUART EDMONDS KEEPS THE PRESSURE ON IN THE EMERALD ISLE, GRAEME IRWIN KEEPS THE PRESSURE ON IN ENGLAND AND THE CROCK STAR MAKES HIS RACING COMEBACK...

Words by Stevie Mills Photo by Suttly

A great big welcome back goes out to the Crock Star! Only a few months ago following a dreadful crash along the infamous Hawkstone Park start straight our Gordy was sitting in the departure lounge, contemplating wings as his next form of transport! But not one to let a mere thing like that stand in the way of racing motocross, the big man is back in the saddle and gunning for another shot at a British title in 2010.

It's going to be a tough road back all right but I have every confidence that GC will make it to the front of the pack – the man is sooooo motivated although his body will take another few months to recover to full strength.

A run out at the Carrick grasstrack was swiftly followed by a shot at the John Donnelly Trophy around the stone-littered hillside circuit just outside Downpatrick. And Gary Gibson's name has been engraved on the prestigious trophy following a day-long duel with Stuart Edmonds and GC.

Perhaps it's a sign of the times but in bygone days the John Donnelly was one of the best meetings on the UK calendar with previous winners including Belgium ace Andre Vromans, UK legend Bob Wright and our own Dave Watson. Although the winner of the JD can still earn a damn good week's wages on a Saturday afternoon, I can't help but remember the splendid events hosted by the Killinchy Club at the track beside Balloo House Bar.

The Carrickfergus MCC came under fire on an Irish internet forum recently as many armchair experts in the art of running events vented their displeasure about the weather and whether the club's grasstrack should have been cancelled or not. Yes, the track was extremely soft due to the previous day's rain

and the racing was somewhat of an endurance test but a massive crowd enjoyed a great evening's entertainment.

GC braved the conditions in his first ride back from the brink of retirement to the delight of the many spectators and GC certainly enjoyed getting back in the saddle in front of his adoring fans. Davy Mulligan and the Carrick club must be congratulated for their on and off track efforts, the promotion of this event was professional and effective.

Congratulations to Natalie Kane – the MVR-D Suzuki lass raced to a fine third position in the first moto in the German GP. The fastest woman in the British Isles, Natalie's finish shows just what is possible if she can get her Suzuki out of the gate. And her starts can only improve as Natalie has just earned herself a Risk Racing electronic holeshot race gate sponsorship package.

Martin Barr returned to his winning ways, taking top scalps at the recent British championship round at Hawkstone Park aboard his Relentless Suzuki – third overall on the day will go a long way towards moving up the leaderboard. And Stuart Edmonds recorded a personal best in the Hawkstone sand, taking a fine 12th place on the big TM thumper in the first moto of the day before the Dublin-based racer followed it up with a 17th second time out.

Graeme Irwin continues to mix it with the best in the UK and holds sixth in the ultra-competitive MX2 series in his first full season of Maxxis competition. Young Graeme was joined by Wayne Garrett in the MX2 ranks at Hawkstone and the TSR KTM pilot carded 13-23 in his first MX2 Maxxis outing of 2009.

Edmonds stole the show during round four of the Irish championship event at the Cork club's

new Sandy Hill venue, 20 miles outside Cork city. Northern lads Garrett and Richard Bird had a long drive home, battered and bruised. Garrett had a big off in an MX2 race while Ricky took a rock in the face on the second lap of the first MX1 moto. Richard bravely fought on despite needing to have his broken nose reset and six stitches to close up the gash – tough lot these motocrossers!

Scores on the doors of the domestic championship look interesting and the man on the ball in the MX1 class is Edmonds who's really looking like a champion elect – and what a party that would be! So is Stuey on the verge of making Irish motocross history as the first ever Irish champion from the Southern Centre? Edmonds leads Garrett by 11 points at the halfway point in the Irish MX1 series while third on 157 points is Watt Kawasaki's Gary Gibson. And Edmonds also leads the MX2 series, the little Italian TM chased all the way by a pack of KTMs led by Bird's Watt/GOMX KTM with Garrett in third.

Loretta Lynn's is probably one of the best places to strut your stuff – a place to get noticed if you are ready to take your game to the next level! Edward Allingham and his spanner-wielding sidekick Jimmy Mac are just the pair of boys to be strutting it large! Jimmy, the reigning British minibike champion, traded his Monstermoto race bike for a flash set of spanners and a plane ticket to the land of opportunity where young Edward is riding a pair of Jim's Motorcycles Hondas. And having made the grade through some tough qualification races he will be on the line at Loretta's – watch this space next month.

Stevie

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The future of the IEWC could be in the balance if a major shake-up of the 2010 calendar backfires

BYE BYE BARCA!

WITH THE HISTORICALLY STAND-OUT EVENT – BARCELONA – MISSING FROM THE IEWC CALENDAR IS THE SERIES SETTING ITSELF UP FOR A FALL?

Words and photo by Jonty Edmunds

Every championship has events that are, for one reason or another, more important than others. The opening round of any series is always significant, as is the last. Then there are those events that are steeped in history. Others offer something unique that no other event can come close to delivering. Some are better simply because of the enthusiastic support of those who attend. Some – the very best of the best – deliver a little of everything.

The Barcelona Indoor Enduro has for years stood head and shoulders above all other indoor enduro events. Not only did it tick pretty much every box that a well-organised, pioneering, exciting and challenging event should, Barcelona is where the idea of an indoor enduro was first put into practice. Barcelona is the home of indoor enduro racing – the sparkling jewel in the sport's crown.

The event became as consistent as Christmas. It was the end-of-season race that was always run and always run well. Even riders not overly keen on indoor enduro racing enjoyed competing in it. It became the event by which all other indoor enduro races were gauged. It was the event's successes that led to the concept being copied, exported to the States and being named the US Endurocross series. It was the king of indoor enduro events organised by the company that now 'promotes' the IEWC series.

But there is going to be no Barcelona Indoor Enduro this winter. With the dates for the 2010 series recently released the competition that started it all is missing which will have a huge impact on the championship. Although no reason has been given for the event's demise, nor any

comment on whether it will return to the series in years to come, the dire state of the economy in Spain is believed to have had much to do with the event not running.

The 2010 series is different in many ways to what those who regularly compete in the championship will be used to and expecting. Replacing the biggest and best indoor enduro event in Barcelona with one being run by enduro newcomers in Sheffield is a brave move by the promoters and the FIM. With the Barcelona event annually the solid foundations onto which the rest of the championship was built, starting with an altogether new event isn't without risk. But the fact that the series starts in the UK is certainly something to get excited about.

What follows is a series that spans four months and mixes one known event – Genoa – with another new race (Vigo in Spain) and two yet to be confirmed races in Mexico and Madrid. In other words after an early start in Sheffield – the race there takes place just two weeks after the ISDE in Portugal – the series could possibly be over by the end of January if the TBC races don't happen.

Including an event in Mexico is, well, two things. Firstly, it's to be expected of the FIM who believe that token 'overseas' events make all the difference if a championship is truly to be seen as a world series. Secondly, it's crazy! Unless the organisers, who are certainly capable of running such an event, pay for all competitors and their mechanics to take the long trip over to Central America I'll put money on the fact that no more than a handful of Europe's best go. All in all with its two new events, two unconfirmed events and

just one established event the series doesn't – on paper at least – appear to be as strong as it could be.

The fact that just one of the possible five events is being run by a promoter that has previous IEWC experience says a lot about how fragile the series could be. With the mother of all indoor enduro events missing from the 2010 calendar what the championship ideally needed was to fall back on a succession of proven and established events. One positive is however that Future West, the team behind the Sheffield event, are proven SX promoters so have loads of experience of staging stuff indoors.

The real worry is what will happen to the championship if the Sheffield and Vigo events go the same way of most all other indoor enduro events and run once and never again? Over the last decade only two indoor enduro events have run more than twice – Barcelona and Genoa. Munich was a good event but never reappeared. Madrid staged a great event in early February but have yet to confirm their place in the 2010 championship.

If Sheffield and Vigo think better of running an indoor enduro in 2011 and if Spain's economic problems rule out events in Barcelona and Madrid too then there won't be a lot left. Hopefully that won't happen and the series will go from strength to strength. But adding expensive flyaway races – whether they are in Mexico, Vegas or wherever – to a championship so small it can hardly be called a championship is madness. Let's just hope that the IEWC series can do without the Barcelona event which will certainly be sadly missed...

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DIRT WITHDRAWAL!

First of all awesome magazine, I can't wait for the month to pass before I get my next copy! I got into motocross about two years ago when I bought my sons a bike each for Christmas, since then we've been hooked.

Me and the boys are out most weekends (much to the disapproval of my wife!) and it has totally changed our lives. We had planned to race the season in Cumbria, then disaster struck and I was sent to Afghanistan for a six-month tour (March to September).

Since arriving here I have been pining like a lost puppy to get back on my bike – it's quite funny how Afghanistan just looks like one big motocross track!

So when opportunity arose I couldn't help myself. As you can see the bike is a beast, it doesn't turn, go or stop very well and I haven't got a clue what make it is (HHH?) but the five minutes I spent razzing around on it put a giant smile back on my face. We took some photos – I hope you like them!

Sgt Kev Wright #804 (I'm the one in the t-shirt), Afghanistan

HHH – or ATK? And we're loving the skidder – not sure if it's a Shoei or an Arai? Keep up the good work Kev and have a pair of Etnies with our compliments...



NEWBIE #1

I'm trying to start racing motocross but am finding it hard to get news of any upcoming races so a few tips wouldn't go amiss. Also, I'm looking to sell my RM85 and looking for a 125 but I can only find stupidly priced bikes at the moment. Please help!

Matt, Oxon

For good value bikes and details of upcoming meetings your best bet by far is to grab a copy of our weekly sister publication Trials and Motocross News – have a word with your local friendly newsagent and we're sure he or she will reserve you a copy...

CUSTOMER DISSERVICE!

I read with great interest and a certain amount of smugness about how the MXGP had lost money. I'd been looking forward to making the trip to my first ever GP this year up until the point I was told I would have to pay £35 to camp. The fee covers up to four people but since I am a Billy-No-MX-Mates, £75 for the weekend became too expensive.

I told the lady on the other end of the phone that this price structure would be putting people off coming and could she please let the organisers know. She replied by firmly telling me that it hadn't put anybody off and that tickets were selling very well.

I told her that it had put at least one person off – me – and that after losing money on the Handlebar event they should be trying to get everybody interested in MX through the gate. After listening to her rant loudly at me about how the Handlebar Festival was a great success and the GP would sell out I eventually hung up, amazed that she had turned a potential sale into an argument.

Well two weeks later and I open DBR and T+MX to hear that it hadn't been such a success after all. Looks like I'll be spending my money at the Dirt 3-2-1 event instead.

Lee, Tyne and Wear

To be fair to RHL Activities the cost of staging a GP does mean this has to be reflected in the pricing of tickets, camping etc. Luckily we don't have to pay a big fat fee to Youthstream to stage Dirt 3-2-1 although the hotel bar bill for DBR editorial could well come pretty close...

'ORRID OLLY!

One of the upsides of racing motocross is the funny memories you have when your little brother gets an injury. I have never seen him so content as when he was in the ambulance sipping down the gas and air mixture that they were feeding him from a massive bottle. He was so out of it he had to ask me the time when there was a big clock literally 30cm from the tip of his nose. He also offered me a drink of the gassy substance but I declined as I think he might have a fungal infection.

Anyhow, Muc-Off would be nice for my bike which is actually getting muddy at the moment because I'm not in plaster up to the top of my thigh because I wasn't stupid and didn't manage to break both of the bones in my leg in three places. Actually he's still racing – in fact I saw him racing a small girl in a wheelchair on his crutches just the other day!

Oilly, Devon

There's nothing like a bit of brotherly love – and that's nothing like a bit of brotherly love! Have some Muc-Off and clean up your act!

BABY BADGER!

A few weeks ago I sent a letter to Carl Nunn at DBR and was very pleased to win the star prize of a pair of his signed goggles! I took them to show and tell at school along with a copy of DBR to show my friends and teacher who were all very jealous! I start racing next month so keep some front covers free for me...

Jack, via email

Jack, if you're any bit as fast as Granddad Badger we'll reserve the August 2020 cover just for you young fella...



NEWBIE #2

I am 15 – soon to be 16 – and have found an important problem with my '05 CRF250R. It's knackered with the gears in tatters and a lot needing done to it. I have now found myself in the situation where I need to, once sorted, sell it on to get a new toy.

I do not race yet as I am in the process of learning the techniques which I am slowly but surely doing. I ride tracks most of the time and in fields the rest and want to stick to motocross. I am roughly six foot and 14 stone and would like advice on a suitable bike.

The size of the CRF seemed to suit well but I am not too bothered about different models and two-stroke will be best as it is cheaper. Please let me know what you think...

Kieran, Ross-shire

If it's a two-stroker you're after then keep your eyes peeled for a 250 – a 125 will be too small and they are pretty tricky to ride properly as you need good technique to keep them in the powerband. As for the model, if you're buying secondhand you're better to go for condition rather than a particular marque. Again, as with the advice we gave Matt from Oxon, Trials and Motocross News is a great place to find one – and to sell your CRF...



GOT SOMETHING TO SAY?

WELL HERE'S WHERE YOU SHOULD BE SAYING IT...

Write to Rant at the usual address or email us at rant@dirtbikerider.co.uk. All letters/emails must be accompanied by a full address. Oh and please don't send emails all in capitals. Cheers!

LETTERS WIN PRIZES

Write to Rant, get your letter published and you'll win a one-litre trigger bottle of marvellous bike cleaning fluid Muc-Off. And if we rate your letter highly enough you'll also receive our star prize – this month a pair of Etnies Sheckler 2 shoes.





FOX RACING YOUTH V-1 HELMETS

Fox helmets are some of the best in the business as they're very comfortable, protective and good looking too! These V-1 helmets for the youth of today are no different and are competitively priced too making them something to seriously consider protecting the noggin of your dirt biking nipper with!

Price: £85
Supplier: foxeurope.com
Contact: 0191 487 6100



ZERO7 IDK1 KNEE GUARD

My orthopedic surgeon reckons you only get one pair of knees in life and so it's worth looking after them as best you can. That's why splashing out on a pair of super-protective knee guards like these sweet little numbers from Zero7 is a good idea. Available in the UK for the first time they're super-tough and super-comfortable too and should help your mid-leg bendy bits take everything a day at the races can throw at them in their stride...

Price: £74.99
Supplier: apico.co.uk
Contact: 0870 777 9201



APICO STOOL STAND

If you ever leant your bike against the side of your new van then watched in horror as it slid down the side, leaving a long scratch in your pride and joy's paintwork then you probably wished you'd bought yourself a sweet ass bike stand like this sexy little number from Apico...

Price: £34.50
Supplier: apico.co.uk
Contact: 0870 777 9201



FOX RACING SUNGLASSES COLLECTION

Judging by the amount of squinting eyes I can see from the safety of the DBR office I reckon summer's just about here which means it's time to go out and buy some new sunnies! And that's where Fox come in because their new range of 2009 eyewear is simply stunning from the £89.99 brown sugar-framed, dark bronze-lensed Aliators to the £99.99 Heretics pictured here in electric blue with Memo print and a grey lens. Then of course there are Elliot's favourites – the Meeting which EBB likes to rock in polished white with a black gradient lens...

Price: from £89.99
Supplier: foxeurope.com
Contact: 0191 487 6100



FOX RACING YOUTH 360 RACEWEAR

Cooler than a fridgeful of freezer pops, this awesome 360 racewear range from Fox is kid specific which means it's designed, cut and constructed with mini warriors in mind. Youth 360 racewear is available now from a Fox dealer near you...

Price: Pants £90 Jersey £25
Supplier: foxeurope.com
Contact: 0191 487 6100



FLY RACING NECK BRACE

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SCOTT DAWGS

PRO DECALS CUSTOM BUTT PATCHES

After being classed as factory unobtainium throughout the history of motocross, custom butt patches are now available to the masses from brand new posterior pimpers Pro Decals.

Price: £19.99 inc p+p
Supplier: pro-decals.com
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DIRT BIKE B***H LADIES CASUAL WEAR

As a sponsor of the British ladies' championship and with a massive range of casual clothing for females, DBB are making inroads in the WMX community. Check out their full range of products and mission statement at www.dirtbikebitchuk.com...

Price: Beanies £10.95 Tracksuit jacket £29.99 Hoodies £24.99 T-Shirts from £15 Strappy vest £12.95
Supplier: dirtbikebitchuk.com
Contact: 01283 541421

TUBLISS TYRE CORE

As an ex-GP racer and multi-championship winning mechanic, Karl Prestwood knows the difference between the products we think we want and the products that we need which is why you'll find very little in the way of useless bling flying from the shelves of his warehouse in the Midlands. The latest must-have products in the KPR range are these TUBliss pneumatic rim locks...

The TUBliss system completely eliminates the need for an inner tube which means it's virtually puncture proof, offers better traction and reduces unsprung weight too but how does it work? It's basically a full circumference pneumatic rim lock which secures the entire tyre bead to the rim in an air-tight stylee completely removing the need for an inner tube as you can now directly add air to the tyre. As most punctures are caused by pinched inner tubes and because there's **no** tube to pinch in the TUBliss system it's happy days!

Check out www.nuetech.com/tubliss for more detailed information...

Price: £99.99 per wheel
Supplier: kpr-motocross.com
Contact: 0845 459 5409



A wide-angle photograph of a dirt bike track under construction. The foreground shows dark, freshly tilled soil with some small white and red flowers. In the middle ground, a yellow excavator is visible on a raised section of the track. The background features a line of green trees under a bright blue sky with wispy white clouds.

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PHAT CAT!

New STR Honda signing James Noble styles it up on the FatCat Motoparc SX track as he helps to dial it in for the big Dirt 3-2-1 off-road festival there on July 17-19 where visitors will also be treated to top-drawer motocross and endurocross action plus shedloads more

Photo by Suttty

GIANT KILLER!

OUR TECH EDITOR TAKES ON THE IRON GIANT AT THE ERZBERG RODEO – AND LOSES! STILL, WITH JUST 21 FINISHERS FROM A STARTING LINE-UP OF 500 HE'S NOT THE ONLY ONE...

Words by Geoff Walker Photos by Jason Ecclestone and GEPA-pictures.com

The Iron Giant! The toughest race on earth! The Erzberg Rodeo has got a reputation for being just about as hard as it comes so Team DBR headed off to Austria to find out what all the fuss was about with a lot of help from ISO2 Sports Nutrition, Throttle Entertainment and Husqvarna Germany...

Lastminute.com struck again with this adventure as on the Monday morning before the race we weren't going but by the evening a 250F racebike had been sorted from Markus at Husqvarna in Germany. So we were off the following day with the Mayor of Neva Rite at the helm of the good ship ISO2 – or Mariah as he likes to call his Vee Dub...

We were supposed to be running an epic road trip to Erz this year for a Throttle Entertainment DVD but technical difficulties caused us to pull the plug on that plan and I had all but given up on the whole thing. So it was cool to be going but I was a little reserved about the trip as I knew getting on a bike I had never seen or ridden before to do this particular race would not be the best plan. But in true DBR stylee we just cracked right on with it and headed for the mountains.

The road trip went smoothly, the sleeping in the van was not so smooth and toothache had arrived so I was on top form! At least Mark had something (else) to rip the p**s out of me about...

Just 24 hours after leavin' HQ we arrived at the foot of the Iron Giant. Now when I say giant I really mean GIANT! This is a mountain on a massive scale and it took a couple of days to stop feeling dizzy every time I looked up towards the top of the thing! We parked up and went to have a look around. Massive is the only way I can describe what we saw – massive hills on a massive scale.

The hills we would be riding up at the start of the race to get out of the quarry are super-steep with a silty, sandy type surface. This is where you see most of the carnage on your TV screens. The really technical stuff is further out from the quarry but most riders don't get to see that as they are struggling with the first half of the course. Myself and Mark walked around the quarry looking for clues as to where the track might go.

Taddy Blazusiak has won it the last couple of years and we found him and Kiwi ace Chris Birch while we were walking part of the course. Taddy was chucking rocks around in a bid to make the smoothest line through some boulders. Was I seeing this correctly? Fair play if a guy wants to walk the track and find some good lines but this was ridiculous. It was four days before the main event and the guy was making his way around the entire site in a

4x4 truck creating his own 'special' lines.

Personally, I think the course should be completely closed to everyone so you have to deal with whatever the organisers chuck at you when and if you arrive at that particular point. I found out after that the top guys actually get to ride on some of the tough parts. Now that is a complete joke!

Anyway, enough ranting – here's how the event goes...

Thursday – registration, endurocross practice and Rocket Ride. The Rocket Ride is a new race for the top guys with a straight run up some levels of the quarry from a standing start. A freestyle dude from Belgium won it. Superb!

Friday – prologue qualifying runs up the Iron Giant to try to make the top 500 from over 1500 riders plus endurocross heats and final.

Saturday – prologue second qualifying runs and more endurocross heats and final.

Sunday – the main event, a hare scramble for the top 500 qualified riders.

The entire site becomes an absolute mad place to be from Thursday morning. There are bikes flying all over the place and it becomes a free for all as everyone wants to practice getting up the hills around the quarry. There is no control and it can get super-hairy at times. In the words of Dougie Lampkin "it's 2,000 mad foreigners out of control here!" and I won't argue with that!

The endurocross wasn't a possibility for me at Erz due to my late entry deal but I enjoyed watching it for a while. I won't go into the racing too much as most of the top guys decided to give it a miss after the odd race or two – the word was out that the organisers had really toughened the hare scramble course so everyone was saving themselves for the main event.

To cut a long story short, there were two stand-out riders for me in the endurocross zone – one was Neil Flockhart who ripped and the second was my new hero Andy Cripps who tore it up in the endurocross and jumped just about every section in a true show of crazy bravery. The Brit pack rocked the endurocross and every heat on the first day was smoked by the awesome British riders but by Saturday it was a bit of a lame affair as most riders had started to feel the pressure of the main event on Sunday.

>>



British hero Dougie Lampkin gives it beans on the Beta but he succumbs to heat exhaustion and a flying rock in the closing stages....

© Sven Carlén/Bull Photofiles

PROLOGUE >>

We headed to the Husky truck to meet Markus only to find out that the 250 race machine was to be replaced by a completely stock 450F – the bike was out of the crate with the indicators taken off and that was pretty much it with no mousses etc. I was a bit disappointed and we didn't have anything with us to sort it as I thought we were getting a fully-prepped racer. But at least we were here so we had to get on with it.

With the big Husky picked up from Markus we set up camp in the pouring rain and took the bike for a little test run before the prologue began. The bike was running okay but was in full stock trim and with pretty much every EU restrictor on earth in place the bike was struggling for the desired amount of ponies required to blast up the near vertical hills. Jason and Jon turned up all the way from Tenerife to help and all they found upon arrival was a dejected Norn Irishman. A little bit of part removal and some clutch work saw the Husky develop a little more aggression and then it was time to head into the massive queue to get my shot at the mountain run up the fire roads of the Iron Giant.

The low numbers get to go early before the hill cuts up and there is a big advantage over the 45 corners and wide open straights when there are no bumps or slower riders to deal with. I got in line where I could and settled in between a 1991 KX125 and some kind of roadbike hybrid type thing. The guys make some seriously scary looking weapons for the prologue and a Yamaha R1 with knobbies is an amazing sight and sound when it's on the gas on the mountain!

I set off and for the next 10 minutes had an absolute blast – this is what I had come for, the competition with the mountain had started! To truly get a dirt bike working at its absolute maximum is a great feeling and although the world wasn't rushing by quite as quickly as I would have hoped for at least the big Husky was maxxed out. Trying to work out where the track goes is the main problem when you haven't seen the place before but it's all part of the Erz experience. I was reasonably happy with the run but I wasn't expecting great things from my time – I thought it wouldn't be good enough for top 500 as the clutch started to heat up and drag from about halfway up.

As it turned out the run was reasonable all things considered and we ended the first day in 190th place. Normally that time would stand as the track gets super gnarly for day two so improvements are few and far between on the second day. Suttly was in contact as soon as the times came out on the internet and I had my orders to take 30 seconds off my time which would take me from the fourth row to the second row which would give me a realistic chance of a finish – 30 seconds! Holy moly!

I did try my best and with an improved bike under me things were moving along a little faster on the second day's run but the track was cut up good and it was a scary ride at times as some of the flat-out parts from day one were impossible to hit flat-out on day two. I tried my best and even managed to overshoot a few corners along the way which proved I had indeed removed my brain for this run. I managed to take a very pleasing 10 seconds off my time despite the off-track excursions, moving me up to a still disappointing 177th which saw me remain on the fourth row of the start.

According to just about everyone you have to be on the first two rows to even think about a finish so I was gutted to say the least. But the Husky was prepped thanks to the guys and we even fitted a different tyre for the race. The fact it was going onto a tube and not a mousse was hard to stomach but that's the way it was.

Dan Hemingway heads to a great seventh place

© Sven Carlén/Bull Photofiles

Angry Geoff Walker – top right – fights his way through the carnage



Taddy's the daddy for the third year running at Erzberg



Former WTC star Graham Jarvis takes the 250F Sherco to a stormin' second



Sometimes a good tug's the only option...



Sometimes a good tug's the only option...



THREE N' EASY! TADDY HAMMERS A HAT-TRICK!

With Geoff Walker out with a puncture the way's clear for Taddy Blazusiak to take his third Erzberg Red Bull Hare Scramble win on the trot – and he does it in style with his finishing time of 1.41:56 over 40 minutes ahead of second-placed Brit Graham Jarvis with German Andreas Lettenbichler in third.

Only 21 riders from the 500 who start actually make the finish and among them are six Brits with Graham leading home Ben Hemingway in fourth, his brother Dan Hemingway in seventh, Mark Jackson in 11th, Andrew Reeves in 17th and Martin Craven in 20th.

It could have been even better but former world trials champ Dougie Lampkin is forced to pull out with heat exhaustion which also does for extreme enduro hardman Paul Bolton. Despite an earlier crash which ripped off fingernails and crushed his thumb, Dougie's in second in the closing stages of the event when he collapses. And while he's recovering a flying rock from the rear wheel of Lettenbichler's Beemer hits him square on the napper, resulting in concussion. Still, on the bright side he does get a trip in the air ambulance out of it!



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RACE DAY >>

Race day was superbly hot and sticky and I was well hydrated and fully ISO2'd up. I knew I would have to be very careful with the tyres to avoid punctures but I still had to be ready to rock. As usual I wasn't very organised and forgot to go get my new number – #177 – so I rocked up to the start only to be turned away and I had to wait to get my new numbers and stick 'em on.

There is a lot of tension in the front few rows but this is diluted into a fun atmosphere the further back you go where there are mad Austrians and Germans absolutely everywhere you look. Up in the first few rows it's a Brit fest and I want to say a massive 'big up' to all the Brits who travel out there and do off-roading in the UK a massive service. We have some of the most skilful extreme racers on earth and with more guys coming over from trials it's getting better and better with every race.

The first row starts at noon and then the other rows go at about one-minute intervals. The dust from the first row was unbelievable and they hadn't even reached the first massive uphill – it was going to be impossible to see a thing! Some of the front row didn't make it to the top of the first hill and at this point I knew I would have to be patient in picking my lines and timing to get up each hill clean.

There were some legends in my row who must have been road men because all hell cut loose on the first hill with bodies everywhere. The Husky ripped up

the first series of hills and I was already into the first and second row start guys. A bit of pushing and shoving at the first nasty downhill and I was starting to enjoy myself – this wasn't so bad. Next thing I knew, about 10 feet short of the top of another huge climb someone went down in front of me and that was it, eject and hide behind the Husky as the grenade-sized rocks started to fly from rear wheels.

I had to turn around and have another go – no worries this time and I was off and passing again and after a couple of awesome downhills it was into the small rock section where we had seen Taddy. This was the only part of the course I knew so I was pumped. I knew the line and all was going good. Then psssst and it was all over – a flat tyre just as my smile was growing. I was absolutely gutted. I rode for another 20 minutes as I was so pissed off and managed to get out of the quarry before the tyre came off the rim. I was back to the van within 45 minutes of the start and it was all over – Erz had beaten me.

Up on the mountain all hell was breaking loose and there was carnage on a massive scale occurring all the way up and around the course. Taddy ripped it, Grimbo ripped it and the rest of the Brits ripped it. What an event! If you like extreme and you haven't been to Erzberg then get yourself out there and get on up the mountain – it's definitely one of those 'things to do before you cark it' events...

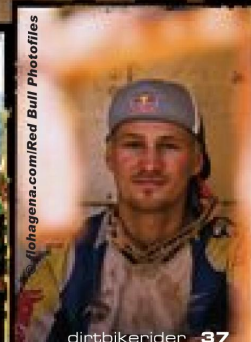


Extreme enduro regular
Chris Birch ends the
event in eighth

CHEERS CHAPS

A MAHOOSIVE THANKS TO...

Sean, Sully and Marge @ DBR HQ, Mark and Paula @ ISO2 Sports Nutrition, Jeff Pakosta @ Throttle Entertainment, Philip and Philippe @ No Fear Europe/Spy Europe, Chris and Michael @ Chain Reaction MX.com, Lapierre Cycles, Jon and Jason @ Deep Blue Media Tenerife, Marcus @ Zupin Husqvarna Germany, Martin Kettner @ Erzberg Press, H and TJ, mama and papa...



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Pedro Tragar leaping out of the valley during a sparsely attended 1994 125 GP

STR Honda's James Noble uses the recent media day to turn a few laps



MX1 leaves the line at last year's Maxxis round



Maler leads Tortelli in '96



First corner action from '96 with Stefan Everts nailing the holeshot and Fred Bolley getting sideways



The MX2 pack hit the valley last year

FOXTHRILL!

WITH THE SIXTH ROUND OF THE BRITISH CHAMPIONSHIP HAPPENING THERE REAL SOON WE LOOK BACK AT SOME CLASSIC AND SOME NOT-SO-CLASSIC FOXHILL MOMENTS...

Words by **Sutty** Photos by **Jack Burnicle** and **Sutty**

Throughout the 1990s Foxhill was the world's favourite motocross circuit with record crowds visiting the valley venue set in the hills above Swindon to witness super-exciting grand prix and British championship race action. Never a particular favourite with the racers due to its high-speed layout and super-slippery, chalk-based surface they nonetheless never failed to impress and put on one hell of a show every single time the GP circus came to town.

Foxhill first hosted a 250cc grand prix in 1992 but believe it or not the Foxhill story starts years earlier as landowner Genevieve Mather explains. "It was towards the end of the '60s when my late husband Jim first created a scrambles course at Shawdene, the estate near Newbury where we live. The track he built and named the Fox and Hounds circuit eventually became very famous and even hosted world championship solo and sidecar events..."

"In the early '80s we inherited the Foxhill estate. There is a natural combe at Foxhill and Jim realised right away that it would make a wonderful natural track. The creation of Foxhill would lead right into his favourite hobby – bulldozing. Armed with his machine and with professional guidance he built the course himself and it was immediately a huge success."

One of Foxhill's first major races was the final round of the 1988 British 125 and 250cc championships – a meeting dominated by Suzuki's Mark Bennett who debuted the 1989 RMs in fine style, gaining four wins from four starts on the day.

In those early days before the GPs rocked up the big meeting of the year at Foxhill was the pre-season Grand National. My first foray south to see scrambles action in Swindon happened in 1991 when as a 15-year-old with two weeks paper round money burning a hole in my pocket I bummed a lift to the GN with the sidecarcross crazy Brown family in their well travelled 608 Mercedes van. The chariot races were cancelled come race day as only Chris Etheridge, Colin Philpott and my travelling buddy Stuart Brown could make it up the hills but that wouldn't dampen my enjoyment of the day!

It was Jeremy Whatley on the Action Workshop Kawasaki who'd claim victory as he powered through the slop on his KX500 to dominate the day's proceedings and although his ride wasn't perhaps so special as the two Whatley moments that truly stand out in my mind – his 250 GP moto wins at Farleigh in '86 and Frome in '88 – he'd definitely reconfirmed himself as a hero.

It'd be another two-and-a-half years before I'd return to Foxhill – this time for the 1993 250cc GP. Bob Moore was a winner in 1992's inaugural epic but missed the '93 edition with a broken foot leaving South Africa's Greg Albertyn to run 1-1-2 to take the overall on the Jan De Groot-tuned JHK Honda.

Race one had been Donny Schmit's to lose and after breaking Albertyn near the end of the 25-minute plus two lap moto that's exactly what the reigning champ did, highsidings the Chesterfield Yamaha just past the finish line with two laps remaining. The severity of the spill was such that dirt packed itself into the Yamaha's silencer blocking it completely and meaning that no matter how hard Donny kicked the Rinaldi-tuned motor over it just wasn't going to start.

The beginning of the second moto saw an accident that would change Foxhill's layout forever as over a quarter of the 40 starters ended up sprawled on the deck in the ferociously fast first turn. For '94 the start – and the pits – would all be on the other side of the valley where they remain to this day.

Albertyn would win again at Foxhill's 250 GP in '94 – there'd also be a poorly attended 125 round held later that year – by riding the wheels off the factory Suzuki to beat Stefan Everts not only in Wiltshire but in the world championship too before heading Stateside.

Fans were treated to a double-header in '95 as both 125 and 250 GPs were held on the same track on the same day! Paul Malin became a true British hero that weekend by winning the 125cc clash on the Cadbury's Boost Dixon Yamaha while Stefan Everts would take an easy double win on the factory Kawasaki on his way to his first 250cc – and Kawasaki's first – world championship title.

The double headers proved so popular the format would stay the same until 1999 – only eventually being replaced by a triple-header in Y2K. And 1996 saw more of the same from Everts who this time piloted the RWJ Honda home to maximum points while Malin chased home French phenom Sebastien Tortelli in the 125s.

Everts would once again be victorious in '97 making it six wins on the bounce and causing the global motocross media to rename Foxhill 'Evertshill'. Fortunately that name never stuck – rather like Neville Bradshaw's more imaginative Wulf Mountains – and it's just as well too because Tortelli would bring an end to Stefan's win streak in '98. >>



Stefan Everts was the master of the Swindon circuit



Track builder Paul O'Gorman chats to Swordy about the circuit changes



Kurt Nicoll leads
Greg Albertyn in '94

FAVOURITE FOXHILL MOMENTS...

MVR-D SUZUKI'S CARL NUNN >>

"I always used to love riding here because there was so much atmosphere and the crowd was just deafening. Before I raced here myself though I remember standing on the bank as a spectator and you couldn't really hear the start because people were already cheering and then the bikes would appear at the top of the valley and the place just lit up – I've never witnessed anything like it at any other race around the world."

"Another favourite time was in 1998 when I passed Chiodi for the lead in the grand prix here and the crowd went mental. I was only 18 at the time and I caught and passed Puzar, Vuillemin and Chiodi to take the lead. Chiodi was obviously a lot more experienced and able to wear me down and take the lead back and Vuillemin got me as well. I still took two thirds on the day to take second overall though and to do that in front of my home crowd was awesome – that was back in the day when we were pulling huge crowds into that place."

RED BULL KTM UK'S STEPHEN SWORD >>

"I always love racing at Foxhill as it's one of my favourite circuits and probably the best moment for me was at the KWS in '02 when Dobby was racing on the 125. After winning the world championship in 2001 he moved up to the 250 class and only did two races on a 125 that year – the Austrian GP which he won and the KWS at Foxhill. I beat him in both motos here so that was a great result for me and I was quite happy to be the only rider who beat him on the 125 all year."

"Years before that I remember watching on the hillside with Carl Nunn – it was the year that Maler won it – and there was just a great atmosphere. I remember thinking I'd love to be out there racing at the front of the pack with all the air horns blowing and that – I guess the closest I got to riding in that sort of atmosphere would be on the Isle of Wight."

MOTOVISION'S GARETH CHAMBERLAIN >>

"One of the best times I can remember was watching Puzar, Moore and Schmit come out for practice in close formation on those white Chesterfield Yamahas – that was trick! And I always loved it when the Brits did well here – Nunny, Herring, Dobber or whoever – because it just elevated the atmosphere. The funny thing is that from '91 until 2000 – which were the real glory years for Foxhill – I was stuck on a tower down at the bottom filming for Motovision so I wasn't able to hang out on the hillsides with my mates drinking beer... I did do that in the evenings though!"

QUICKIE QUESTION TIME

TWO TICKS WITH MX-TRACKTECH'S PAUL O'GORMAN >>

Paul O'Gorman's been building top race tracks professionally for quite some time now under the guise of MX-Tracktech and as well as building tracks for Youthstream and Angelina Jolie has been the man in charge of bringing change to Foxhill. Bringing the venue back up to date after those disastrous mudbaths has not been easy but the revamped Foxhill is already a real testament to Paul's skills and there are plenty more changes to come...

DBR: What's the long term plan with the track here at Foxhill?

PO'G: "The objective is to make the track more technical and to create better racing. You can't do that just by making the jumps bigger – there's no racing goes on when the riders are in the air and we're not here to put on a stunt show – so I've been looking at ways to give the riders more options and to open up more lines."

DBR: The dirt seems to be a lot better than it used to be – have you had to bring fresh soil in?

PO'G: "We've been able to improve the dirt quality as well and that's without importing soil to the venue. While laying the roads into the pits and parking areas I've been skimming the top soil and bringing that down to the track so everything that's here comes from the site. That's some really good dirt and we've still got some stockpiled up."

DBR: Are you happy with how the venue is now?

PO'G: "It's been a lot of hard labour and I feel like I almost live up here now because I spend so much time on site but it's honestly really worthwhile when I get to watch some good racing because at the end of the day Foxhill is a little bit magic so it's a real honour to work here – it's a labour of love I suppose."

DBR: Do you think we'll ever see a GP at Foxhill again?

PO'G: "I would like to think that one day we'll get a GP back here – it definitely warrants it – and it's the natural place for it in the UK. Yes, it's a hard place to work on but the atmosphere and racing this place can produce is above all others – I'd definitely like to see it back here again that's for sure."



Gareth Chamberlain's
witnessed many of
Foxhill's magic moments



Albee – popular winner



US star Tallon Vohland in '96



Carl Nunn relives past glories – as an 18-year-old he passed then world champ Chicco Chiodi around Foxhill



British championship action from '93 with Mark Eastwood getting the holeshot ahead of Nicoll, Herring and Cooper



Lewis Tombs in '08 MX2 action



Albee wins in '93

And although Tortelli's double victory went down well with the 30,000-plus crowd it was the emergence of Carl Nunn as a bona fide GP front runner that most fans will remember from that day. The then bleached blond 18-year-old didn't get the best of starts in moto one but courageously fought through the pack on the perilously slippery chalk hillside circuit to lead the race not once but twice. Carl couldn't build a lead though and eventually finished third as Alessio Chiodi and David Vuillemin finally got the better of the Suffolk nipper.

Race two netted another third place for Nunn who'd claim second overall and take a well deserved lap of honour causing the excitable crowd to break through the fences and give the home country hero a deserved slap on the back.

Nunny would be back in September that year too as he teamed up with Robbie Herring and Paul Malin to represent Team GB at the Motocross des Nations – the first time the MXdN had been held in the UK since 1980! Unfortunately for the 50,000 fans who turned out for the world's biggest and most prestigious annual motocross race the fantastic weather that had blessed each and every Foxhill GP leading up to this event broke and torrential rain ensued leaving the circuit, pits, car parks and country roads for miles around a muddy brown mess.

The Belgians ran riot that rain-soaked afternoon with Stefan Everts surprisingly leading the way just a couple of weeks after having some sort of mental breakdown as he handed the world title to Tortelli in Greece. The future GOAT gave the world's leading riders – including another future GOAT called Ricky Carmichael – a lesson in mud riding that afternoon as Team Belgium took the overall ahead of Finland and New Zealand. Team GB finished seventh overall after Nunn seized a motor on a particularly tricky hill that the editorial staff at DBR at the time called Heartbreak Ridge. Herring meanwhile dislocated his knee while running top three in moto one and Maler ran a consistently inconsistent 4-25.

A new promotion team in the form of Two Four Sport's Robert Fearnall and his crew brought the bad weather back for 1999's double-header except this time there was no Everts to make it look easy as he sat out the first two thirds of the season with a destroyed knee. With the King at home enjoying the races live on Eurosport it was up to Dutchman Remy Van Rees to take control at the front at the pack on his privateer Kawasaki. Husqvarna-mounted Paul Cooper made a good fight of it for a while but had to settle for second overall as there'd be no stopping 'Van Race' who'd slip-slide his way to one of his few GP victories. Meanwhile Jamie Dobb

thrilled the crowds in the 125cc class taking second on the Hooper Suzuki.

Dobber'd go one better the next year although not many will remember that fact as the weekend went down in the history books as another ridiculously wet and wild one. In fact the Y2K GP would almost be the final nail in the coffin for Foxhill as the 250 and 500 races never even happened and the venue was totally wrecked by the deluge of rain over the three days – the track was totally unrideable and the lush green pits were a Glastonburyesque sea of slop.

With no promoter willing to try and begin rebuilding what was left after those three mudders in a row the Foxhill circuit lay totally dormant through 2001 and it wasn't until '02 that Ken Winstanley and his band of merry men worked their asses off to try and recreate the lost magic. Despite going to town on the place and preparing it for the masses only a handful of spectators turned out to watch Dobber make one of two race appearances on a 125cc machine that year as the reigning world champion.

As the years went by and the KWS turned into the British Masters the Foxhill circuit remained a favourite of riders in that series but nothing more was made of the once magical circuit. That was until the start of 2008 when Ms Mather hired MX-Tracktech's Paul O'Gorman with a view to restoring Foxhill to its former glory. "The plan is to pour over £30,000 into improvements that will make Foxhill the crown jewel of international motocross once more," said the pro-active circuit owner at the time.

Part one of that plan was to bring back domestic championship motocross to Foxhill in 2008 with a view to possibly promoting an MX3 GP the following year. While the GP never materialised – Hawkstone Park scored that one – the Maxxis series did indeed return to Foxhill in the summer of '08 for one of the best rounds of the year, remarkably held in scorching sunshine!

While Billy MacKenzie blitzed 'em in MX1 the battle for the win in MX2 was an all-out epic as Shaun Simpson and Stephen Sword scrapped for the full race distance in both motos with Swordy coming out on top while newcomer to the UK scene Zach Osborne made an amazing rookie performance on the UTAG Yamaha to finish third overall. It was a great day's racing but the crowd was surprisingly sparse...

However, rather than getting too disheartened the Foxhill team have taken what they learnt from that event and are going all out to make the '09 clash even better with even more track improvements and even more pre-event promotion for their July 26 event which is round six of the Maxxis series.



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AFTER SITTING OUT LAST SUMMER WITH INJURIES, SICILIAN HOTSHOT TONY CAIROLI MOVED UP TO THE MX1 DIVISION IN 2009 WHERE HE'S WASTED NO TIME IN MAKING HIS PRESENCE FELT...

Words and photos by Alex Hodgkinson

Even Tony Cairoli didn't expect himself to be at the sharp end of MX1 week-in, week-out in his debut season on an arm-wrenching 450. The Red Bull De Carli Yamaha star might be a two-time MX2 world champion but he was coming off major knee and wrist reconstructions and started the season off more than slowly.

But the spark which has made the 23-year-old one of the most popular riders in the sport ignited at round three in Turkey and he's not surrendered the red plate since.

"I have to be satisfied with my first MX1 season so far and also surprised," admits the super-fast Sicilian. "I never expected to be leading so early in the year. When I entered the class I hoped that I could be racing at the top by the end of the year and perhaps finish top three. But now of course I

want to race for the title."

The first sign that Tony could really be a contender came just one week before the world championship opener when he outpaced a GP class field in every training session and both motos of the final round of the Italian domestic series at Odole.

"It was my plan to be physically prepared for the start of the season though I was still not 100 per cent of course. I couldn't train at all after my operations last summer so I just chilled out until Christmas, then in January and February I worked hard on my condition. I don't work with a trainer, I do it myself. But I know what I need. I knew that I needed strength for MX1 so that is what I concentrated on. I still wasn't riding, only playing around a little for fun and you saw that I did not have speed on the bike at Mantova in February and also for the next few races. >>



*Two-time MX2 world
champ Antonio Cairoli
is shooting down the
big guns of MX1*





"But I was getting better every week, both physical and in my speed on the bike. It was really good for me that Tanel was also in the team – he's a good guy and also very fast. We trained together and this helped both of us to build our speed. He won the Italian championship but by the last race I was the fastest. I knew the track very well because we did a lot of our testing there last year and it was nearly a GP field but I was a second-a-lap faster than everyone else all weekend.

"That was good for my confidence before the start of the GPs. And by then we were using some of the special parts we had for the GP bike, not all but some and the bike was strong."

The GP opener at Faenza, an appalling mudbath, was clearly no true indication of form but in Bulgaria the signs of speed at the death were there as Tony nearly ran down Josh Coppins and defending champion David Philippaerts, even showing them his front wheel on a downhill before deciding to play it safe.

"You have to be clever. There are times like those downhills in Bulgaria where you could go inside on a 250 but you can't do it on a 450 because you will never make the corner at the bottom. My head wanted to say yes but then I realised it was not possible – better take points than crash."

The win in Turkey after an enthralling duel with Philippaerts earned him the red plate but surely the most emphatic success to date came in the first moto in the heavy sand of Valkenswaard.

"I really surprised myself in that race. I expected that to be the toughest race for me during the first half of the season but I found a good pace and ran a good race tactically."

The key to success was the way Tony managed to pace himself better than the MX1 regulars. Was he surprised how the experienced

450 men let the rookie run rings around them tactically?

"I never really thought about the others. I just ran my own race, not even jumping high because of the broken spokes [the result of a first lap collision with Steve Ramon] and when the chance came for me to take control of the race I did so. The work I did at the start of the year had given me the fitness to win."

Track layout and preparation in the early rounds also played a role in earning – and keeping – that red plate.

"The tracks for the first few races were good for me. There were some natural tracks and even Turkey was good. There were a lot of lines there and you saw that in the racing because we were able to pass. But I didn't like Mallory Park or Ernee – I didn't like the way they had built the jumps and I didn't feel comfortable. Of course the rain didn't help in France but it was so difficult to pass there with only one line, even on Saturday in the dry.

"I was also not riding like my real self. I hear that I was too aggressive and I played it cool for a couple of races."

But in Germany it was the old Tony again – pushing, niggling, switching lines like only he can, finding that extra second which makes the difference. His last lap quali victory at Teutschenthal over Max Nagl was a classic, his narrow defeat in the first race the next day a slight misjudgement.

Again the German holeshot and escaped and Tony sought a way past Josh Coppins. Once second Tony upped the stakes, Max reacted to keep his gap and the Sicilian wisely slipped back to cruise control. Pushing too hard at 20 minutes could have wrecked both their races but the German also knew that he would come again in the final stages.

Three laps out Tony started to move. Nagl

was tired but he dug deep, determined not to be beaten again. At times they were nearly side-by-side on the last lap but Tony just came up short. "I left it a lap too late," he admitted in the evening. But there was no waiting in race two – Tony took the lead on lap two to clinch the overall, his third of the season.

So has the Sicilian already conquered the 450 beast? "I have learnt a lot about racing a 450 but I still need to learn more. I try to ride it like did the 250. Of course you cannot play with the bike like a 250 but I try to keep my speed through the turns. You know, I watched the MX1 motos last year and I felt that they were really static, nobody was doing anything unusual with special passes like you can see in MX2. For sure it is more difficult because it is heavier but that is my aim. I'm not there yet but every day I feel more confident."

Tony's race to glory has not been without incident and clashes with David Philippaerts in Portugal and Billy MacKenzie in Spain stand out in particular.

The second moto in Turkey between the two Italian champions had been one of the highlights of the early season. "Yes, I have had many good races with David in the past in MX2 like Montevarchi in 2006 and that race in Turkey was like those. We passed each other several times before I finally won. That was a good race."

But the friendship turned sour in Portugal this year. "I honestly did not try to take David out in Portugal. I know he has a problem with it and he was trying some things in Spain one week later but it was a mistake pure and simple. He still has a problem but I hope we can have good races together again, like in the past.

"With Billy it was different. I can see now that there was no way through but it was a mistake of judgment, simple as that. I tried to go through where it was not possible. But it's okay with >>

HITMAN

BLUE.S.A.?

2010 AND BEYOND...

The foresight of Yamaha in ensuring that Tony was committed to them for several years to come means that he will still be racing blue in 2010. But where?

"I am still contracted to Yamaha but my contract to race GPs for the Red Bull De Carli team ends this year. I don't know what I will do next year yet and my contract with Yamaha allows me to decide where I want to race. I have had all my success with the De Carli team and I want to continue with them if possible but I am a professional racer and I have to take the best option.

"Anything is possible – I could even go to America. I already have contact with teams over there who are interested to sign me but the financial side over there is also not the best. But I want to continue to race the GPs. I like supercross and I am not afraid to go over there to race both supercross and motocross but I prefer to stay in Europe.

"One thing is for sure – even if I do go to America one day I will go there to race 450. I will not go back to 250."



Cairol's early-season form has been a revelation – although his aggressive riding has made him a few enemies



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Billy. He can be really angry one day and one week later he has put it behind him. That's Billy."

Indeed it is ironic that two of the most unrelenting characters in the sport should feel aggrieved at Tony's challenges. The Sicilian himself is philosophic about the whole thing. "This is motocross racing and you have to push hard some times."

And he has sympathisers in the strangest places. Even before he went under Tommy Searle at Uddevalla last year and the Brit landed on the floor, the watching Harry Everts was shaking his head at the sweeping outside lines being ridden by the Brit.

"You can ride those lines when you are 10 seconds in front but not when someone is on your rear wheel and particularly not when it is Cairoli. You cannot give him one centimetre or he will go for it. Tony rides hard – like we used to do – but that is motocross."

With the MX1 title now a clear vision how does Tony rate his rivals? "I think David is a big threat, perhaps the biggest. He is the champion and he will get stronger as the series continues. Max too. He is getting faster every week and if that continues then his confidence will rise. At the moment it is the three of us but there are still enough races to go and I will not forget other riders."

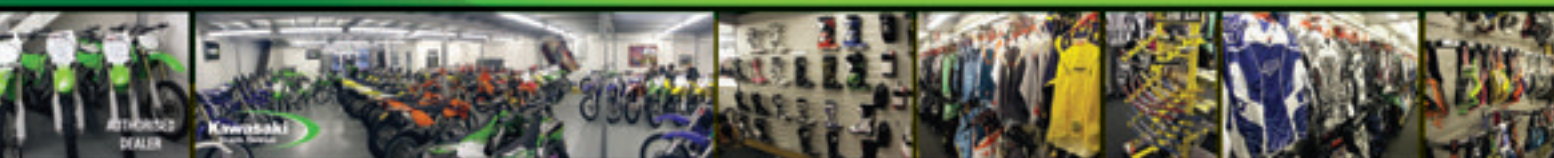
"Ken has had some bad luck but he can come again and I don't think you can forget Josh or Desalle. They are both still close enough in the points. I hope Tanel can challenge too. He can be so fast, he shows that every week, just his starts – they are terrible. If he can get better starts then he can also be in there."



Cairoli leads Max Nagl, a man he rates as a possible threat to his title ambitions



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BORN AGAIN!

HE DIDN'T FALL IN LOVE WITH THE SPORT INSTANTLY BUT WITH INJURY HAVING FORCED HIM OUT OF GP MOTOCROSS, ANTOINE MEO IS NOW ENJOYING A NEW LIFE AS ONE OF THE WORLD'S FASTEST ENDURO RIDERS

Words and photos by Jonty Edmunds

Antoine Meo has a wry smile on his face. Slumped in a camping chair outside the CH Racing Husqvarna team's transporter, the Frenchman is engrossed in the Enduro 1 class results from day one of the GP of Finland.

"One f*****g second," he says, briefly looking up from the results. "I lost six seconds on the Friday night Super Test when I fell and 20 seconds when I made a mistake on the first test this morning. And I finished as runner-up by one second." Shaking his head Antoine puts the results down and finishes readying himself for the prize giving ceremony.

Every bit as fast as home riders Eero Remes and E1 championship leader Mika Ahola, despite his jovial attitude Antoine knows that his name should have been at the top of the E1 class results. But rather than beating himself up about the fact that he messed up he simply scans the results once again. Winning twice as many special tests as any other E1 class rider, Antoine knows his day will come.

Antoine, like countryman Johnny Aubert, is one of the motocross-to-enduro success stories. With a sudden and sizeable influx of motocross riders to the World Enduro Championship in recent years, Meo – unlike some – quickly proved that he has what it takes to compete with the best. Just one-and-a-half seasons into his WEC career, his maiden victory certainly isn't too far away.

What brought Antoine to enduro is typical of why many motocross racers make the switch. After missing nearly all of the '07 MX1 world championship through injury, when he was finally ready to go racing once again he couldn't find a ride. That's when opportunity – in the form of CH Racing Husqvarna team manager Fabrizio Azzalin – came knocking.

"In '07 I had a really big injury," explains Antoine, lifting his shorts to reveal a badly scarred left knee. "I was out for eight months because I needed a complete reconstruction. It was a big operation. When I was over the injury, back riding again and fit and healthy I wasn't able to find a good deal for the next season. I had always had a good relationship with Fabrizio and after a few conversations we started talking about me racing in the WEC."

Initially, Antoine was sceptical about leaving motocross but after coming close to hanging up his boots altogether following his injury he finally decided to give the WEC a try. Planning on doing one season of enduro before trying to find a ride back in motocross, Antoine quickly gelled with woods racing and found he enjoyed the more relaxed atmosphere of enduro world championship events.

"I'm pleased I didn't stop racing because I'm really enjoying myself now. Initially the idea was to do one season of enduro and then look at returning to motocross. I really enjoy riding motocross but the world championship races, well, I am having more fun now than I was in MX GP. At first it was very different to what I was used to but after one year I really started to like it. It's hard for a motocross rider to start with but now I really like enduro."

Antoine joined the WEC at a time when Johnny Aubert was showing in no uncertain terms that French motocross racers could deliver the goods, win races and win championships. So was Antoine simply following >>

Antoine Meo is one of the few top-ranked MXers to make a successful switch to woods racing





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in Aubert's footsteps?

"It might look like I decided to switch to enduro because I could see how well Johnny Aubert was doing but that had nothing to do with it," explains Antoine. "When I was racing motocross for Husqvarna in '05 I asked them to prepare a 125 for me so I could compete in the French WEC GP. That was just for fun.

"The first day went really well – I was fighting with Cervantes and Belometti. I made mistakes, crashed but really enjoyed myself. I had a lot of offers to come to enduro after that from many teams. But I had a good deal with Honda and wanted to stay in motocross. But that's when I started thinking about enduro."

Working with Azzalin and the CH Racing Husqvarna team ensured that Antoine's transition from motocross to enduro was made easier than it could have been. Not needing to get to know the team and reasonably familiar with his machinery and the working practices of the Varese factory, Meo was instead able to focus on learning what was needed to win races.

"You can't compare a team manager like Fabrizio to any of the team managers I worked with in motocross," offers Meo. "He's funny, crazy, serious, passionate, hard working. But he is more like a friend than a team manager. I have a really good relationship with him. Sometimes it's difficult because he is Italian and sometimes too passionate but I really enjoy being a part of the team."

At the start of '08 Antoine came out all guns blazing and topped the Genoa Indoor Enduro, beating one of the very best in the business in the process – David Knight. Overnight Meo went from little known former motocross racer to seriously hot property.

"The season started really well because I won the Genoa Indoor Enduro which was a surprise. I didn't know what an extreme test was really so I just tried to find really hard terrain near my home and ride on that. I started riding my enduro bike on trial terrain. I learned a lot doing that and winning in Genoa was great."

Meo's first 'true' enduro was the snow-covered GP of Sweden. With the long snow ruts, frozen ground and spiked tyres night and day different to what he was used to as a GP motocross racer, Meo finished fifth and sixth in the E2 class aboard his WR250. Not bad.

As the year progressed Antoine mixed some seriously impressive results with beginners' mistakes and a little bad luck. Come the end of the year he placed fifth in the E2 championship standings which when you consider he failed to score any points at all on three separate days isn't too bad. Importantly, Antoine showed that he had the potential to win which is what Husqvarna wanted and needed.

"I made some big mistakes, like in Portugal and Spain. But I think that it was quite a good season for me really," he explains. "I learned a lot."

Interestingly, Antoine chooses to pick out the low points of his first full WEC season, rather than mentioning the highlights. While many riders would be more than pleased to have finished fifth in their debut season, Meo looks back on it knowing that he made mistakes. Mistakes that have to be removed if he is to reach the very top of the sport.

During his 'learning year' Antoine did just that. Showing flashes of brilliance while adjusting to a world very different to that of GP motocross, Meo adapted well and despite occasional disappointment ended the year on a high with a double podium result at the final event of the season.

"You have to learn many things because motocross and enduro are very different. Sure, a fast motocross rider can come to enduro and do well. But to do well in all conditions at all races is different. For example my first WEC race in '08 was the GP of Sweden in the snow. You have to learn and understand racing with spiked tyres in the snow. You also have to understand how and when to go fast. And you have to know where your limit is and that you can't always push 100 per cent. The technical, slow speed sections are probably the hardest for motocross riders. That's where I've trained and worked the hardest."

Today Antoine is one of the WEC's fastest extreme test riders and at the GP of Finland he was quickest on the extreme test on both days, showing just how serious he is about reaching the top.

"You have to work hard at the things you are not so good at," admits Antoine. "You have to train hard. I have a really good training area at my home in France. I have a motocross track, a motocross special test, an extreme test and an enduro test. Everything I need to become a better enduro racer. I think that if you are serious about winning you have to have your own tracks. It doesn't matter if it is supercross or enduro, you need to be training hard all the time. Enduro has changed. You have to train hard and work at things."

Working hard is starting to pay off for Antoine. Although still yet to climb on top of a WEC podium he's getting closer. At the halfway point of the '09 championship Meo has finished >>



He's come close but has yet to top a WEC podium – it's only a matter of time...



MIKA ON MEO

E1 CHAMP RATES THE FAST FRENCHMAN >>

As defending Enduro 1 world champion, Mika Ahola was always expected to be the rider to beat this season. Earning seven day wins from the first four two-day events of the championship, the flying Finn is without question headed towards his second E1 title.

Many expected Italian Simone Albergoni to be his closest championship rival but Mika knew that Meo would take some beating.

"I have known Antoine since the time when I raced for Husqvarna back in '95 and I knew he was a good 125cc racer," explains the Finn. "I was expecting him to be fast on the 250cc four-stroke this season."

"He likes small bikes and learned a lot in his first season last year. I was a little bit afraid of him before the championship started. I knew he would be fast and he is starting to show how fast he can be."

"I'm really enjoying the close competition with him. It makes the races easier because you don't think about getting tired, you just keep on pushing and pushing. Antoine is strong in all conditions so he can finish on the podium at any event. He's only been off the podium once during the first half of the season so I'm expecting him to be really strong during the second half of the championship."



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The Frenchman's victory in the Genoa Indoor in '08 shocked the enduro world



on the podium seven times from eight starts. He's been fast in all conditions, at all events and on all different types of special tests.

But this season, as well as wanting to win the E1 world title, Antoine wants to continue learning which is partly why he switched to a 250cc four-stroke for '09 and away from the E2 class.

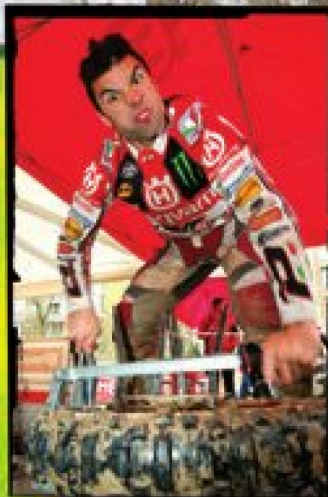
"I think that to be a really good enduro rider you need to start at the bottom with a small bike," says Meo. "You have to find your speed through good lines and not the power of the bike. That's why I wanted to ride the 250cc four-stroke. I have to find my limit on the special tests. When you have a bigger bike it is harder to do that. I am really enjoying riding the smaller bike."

Winning the '09 Enduro 1 world championship is a big ask, especially as defending class champion Mika Ahola has so far showed no signs of weakness during the first half of the championship while building a big points advantage. But that's Antoine's aim.

"I want to beat Mika because he is the best in my class and one of the very fastest riders in the WEC," explains Meo honestly. "It's funny because with Mika it is like trying to beat one of your friends. In motocross I never had that feeling. I think we both have a lot of respect for each other and at the end of the day we are able to speak about our performances. That's one of the things I enjoy about enduro."

So one-and-a-half seasons into his enduro 'career' is Antoine still hoping to return to motocross or is he planning on sticking with racing between trees?

"My future is with enduro, that is for certain. I still love motocross and it's great training so I want to find a good deal where I can have a good bike for enduro and a good bike to compete in some motocross events. I want to stay in enduro but I want to do some important motocross races. I think I'm in a good place in the world championship now – I have a good team, a good bike and I am riding well. I'm enjoying my racing and focused on winning."



Little known fact – Meo was the last man to qualify for an MX GP on a two-stroke, getting his 125cc Husky onto the startgate at Faenza in '08



LUIS DOMINATED
THE SECOND MOTO
OF HIS FIRST 500 GP
AT VALKENSWAARD
IN 1989



SANDS OF TIME!

IN THE 35 YEARS SINCE IT FIRST HOSTED A GP THE LEGENDARY VALKENSWAARD CIRCUIT HAS MOVED WITH THE TIMES WITHOUT LOSING ITS 'MAN-KILLER' REPUTATION...

Words and photos by Jack Burnicle

How good was the first race of the Benelux MX1 GP at Valkenswaard! Combative, fast, exciting and often featuring the top eight on screen all at once! It was like commentating a road race round one of the classic circuits such as Monza, Assen or Imola that so often produce the closest contests.

Valkenswaard, of course, isn't Tarmac. It's a rough, rutted, venomous sand trap. But it is one of the few 'traditional' motocross circuits left on the grand prix calendar – extensively infested with extra jumps and whoops and fairly drastically shortened but nevertheless in spirit still the wide, wicked man-killer of old. Perhaps there's a lesson to be learned here!

Situated in the deep south of the Netherlands near Eindhoven, Valkenswaard first hosted a Dutch GP in 1974, a 250cc round won by Sylvain

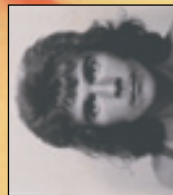
Geboers on a Suzuki. I paid my first visit six years later for Motorsportstichting Valkenswaard's 1980 500 grand prix, halfway stage in a season-long epic for honours between Andre Malherbe (Honda) and Brad Lackey on the Uni-Trak Kawasaki.

Andre led by 13 points from bearded Bad Brad but Valkenswaard always favoured the sandflies and none flew faster through sand back then than Yamaha's new boy Andre Vromans. While his legendary mentor Roger De Coster endured a day of DNFs, Vroom-Vroom (as the Yanks christened him!) flew to his maiden grand prix victory with two resounding race wins. Malherbe and Lackey ("I like this track – all I need is a bit of good luck") duly shared second places behind the lean, likeable Vromans but Brad's luck wasn't all good. His aircooled Kawasaki led the first moto until half-distance

when, three laps after Vromans had floated by, it seized dramatically in a sweeping, deeply bermed right-hander. This allowed through a titanic duel between title rival Malherbe and 500GP newcomer Hakan Carlqvist. The latter then fell foul of a backmarker on the final lap and his monster 490 factory Yam refused to restart in the dense, humid conditions. Dutch home hero Gerard Rond passed to finish third with Carla rescuing fourth but Rondo's team-mate, Frenchman Jean-Jacques Bruno, lost sixth when his Suzuki ran dry almost within sight of the chequered flag.

Angry but undeterred, Lackey surged to the front of the second moto and held on for 15 minutes until Vromans – only ninth after one lap – burst meteorically through to the front. Brad hung on hairily and was rewarded with second and the news that Malherbe had fallen

INTERVIEWER: I'm looking
over your back as
he reflects in empty
KX500 with a lap to go
in 1990



was armed with his mum's Kodak Brownie camera. After art college he mixed life as a graphic designer, magazine art director, photographer and part-time art college tutor with motocross and photo-journalism. Now he's a commentator, painting pictures with words. He never did get a proper job...

JACK BURNICLE is the godfather (our words, not his) of British MX journalism. Born in Billingham, County Durham, to Bella and nutty (his words, not ours) musical genius Stan Burnicle, Jack was mad about cars and motor racing as a kid. At sweet 16 he got a motorbike, rode it to a local 'scramble' and was instantly, hopelessly hooked. Next time he went he

Jack Burnicle

overtaking sixth-placed Steve Beamish (Suzuki) at the end of lap one and brought down the unlucky Englishman! Andre rode hard but could only reach seventh at the flag, just ahead of Jeff Herlings' dad Peter.

A year later another factory Yamaha sandfly – Marc Velkeneers – won the first Dutch 125 GP to be held at Valkenswaard but in 1985, when the big guns returned, world champion elect Dave Thorpe (Honda) humbled Belgian favourites Malherbe and Georges Jobe. The 1987 125 GP finally went to a native Dutch star, Davey Stribos (Cagiva), before the 500s were back to open the 1989 season at the 'Euromotorcircuit'. This time Thorpe struggled, barely making the top 10 in a meeting that almost brought victory for

500 GP rookie Jeff Leisk.

The 24-year-old 'Flying Freckle' had arrived from Perth in Western Australia via three seasons in the US where he wild-carded and won the second moto of the 1988 500 GP at Hollister Hills, California. This so impressed HRC that they called Leisk over to deputise for the injured Thorpe at the San Marino GP (where only a broken chain halted his second race charge to victory) then hired him for a full 1989 grand prix season with backing from Arizona clothing company Chambers. Jeff led the first moto at Valkenswaard until the factory Honda ground to a halt on the last lap, out of petrol, handing victory to moustachioed Belgian Dirk Geukens. Riding a private CR500, dashing Dirk beat Eric Geboers

on the second Chambers bike with German Didi Lacher a surprise third completing a Honda clean sweep ahead of Kees van der Ven (KTM).

Leisky retaliated with a scalding domination of race two. Hardy Brit Kurt Nicoll forced his Kawasaki to second with Belgian beanpole Jacky Martens (KTM) third. So with van der Ven and Geboers behind him, fourth place was good enough for mild-mannered village boy Geukens to land the first of his two 500 GP career wins...

We were back at Valkenswaard on April Fool's Day for the 500 series opener of 1990 – and Thorpe was back in trouble! Newly signed by Kawasaki, his Team Green fuel tank sprouted a crude growth labelled 'April 1st?' after pre-race >>

2 DUTCH 125 GP

Pos	Name	Time
1	David Stribos	41:12.0
2	David Thorpe	41:12.0
3	David Stribos	41:12.0
4	David Stribos	41:12.0
5	David Stribos	41:12.0
6	David Stribos	41:12.0
7	David Stribos	41:12.0
8	David Stribos	41:12.0
9	David Stribos	41:12.0
10	David Stribos	41:12.0



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ON BILLY LILES' APRILIA AT THE 1980 GP OF BELGIUM

testing in Belgium had raised concerns about fuel consumption. Fastest in practice, Thorpe pushed through to seventh after a poor first moto start but the defending champion had to pull out of race two, his pearls of manhood pummelled painfully into submission on a track roughened up by two support races! "Coming off jumps I kept getting thrown forward, banging my private parts against the tank," rued DT. "I survived this for 20 minutes but I couldn't take any more!"

He wasn't the only Brit to suffer. Kurt Nicoll's KTM ran out of petrol at exactly the same place as Leisky's Honda had a year earlier – costing him fourth place a lap from home – and Mark Banks seized his Kawasaki. Up front, Leisk led Jacky Martens (KTM) for 15 minutes until the Belgian attempted an ambitious pass on to the finishing straight. The resultant high-speed collision left Leisk concussed, his left leg jammed in Martens' back wheel and out of action for the day. Martens remounted and recovered madly to place fourth.

Meantime a slimmer, revitalised 'Bullet' Billy Liles – entering his fourth season in GPs – hurled his Johnson Kawasaki to victory ahead of Geukens (Honda) and Georges Jobe's home-brewed watercooled 490 Yamaha special. Georges then clashed with Thorpe on the first

lap of race two, stormed through from 40th and dead last into the top 10 and – you've guessed it – ran of fuel on his penultimate lap! A fabulous feud between Liles and Geukens also illuminated that second moto, the ebullient Southern States 'Georgia Boy' fending off the 1989 winner in a thrilling climax with cool dude van der Ven third. Nicoll survived a careful seventh but this time the muscular Mark Banks, lying 10th, ran dry right beneath the 'one lap to go' board. He expertly fielded a plastic bottle of petrol thrown from the mechanics' area but was later disqualified for 'receiving outside assistance' after crossing the line 14th!

Billy Liles mounted the rostrum alongside Dirk Geukens and delighted Dutch genius Kees van der Ven, who coaxed his KTM serenely to the finish on a standard 9.8 litre fuel tank but the American Liles looked a little pensive when the national anthem of his latest adopted country, Belgium, rang out over the tannoy.

Eighteen months later, the same three nations topped MS Valkenswaard's rostrum as a truly sensational MX des Nations went to the wire between the USA, Belgium and unlucky hosts Holland. And from that moment on this challenging Dutch circuit became a welcome annual fixture on the 250 GP calendar.



LILES AFTER WINNING 1980 DUTCH GP ON JOHNSON KAWASAKI



LAKE J. HOWARD'S 1980 DUTCH GP AT VALKENSWAARD

FEET PINNED. HAFAN CAMERYST RUCKS HIS YAMAHA IN 1980



HOME BOYS!

WITH THE COST OF RACING GPs PUTTING THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS INCREASINGLY OUT OF REACH OF MOST OF OUR TOP PROFESSIONALS, RIDERS LIKE JAMES NOBLE AND CARL NUNN ARE SUDDENLY FINDING MORE OPTIONS – AND BETTER PAYDAYS – WITHOUT LEAVING BRITAIN...

Words by Ed Dole Photos by Suttly

Will Carl Nunn and James Noble's decision to stay home and race in the UK help give the British motocross scene more mainstream appeal and see us standing tall in Europe without the prop of fielding a fleet of GP racers? The answer to that question is difficult to pin down – only time will tell if having more stay-at-home stars will raise the profile of the sport in this country. But one thing's for sure – the European professional motocross scene is changing.

It seems that the days when being a professional motocross rider were all about being at the world championships are on the slide and it's becoming harder to make a living out of being a hard-working pro. So why even bother?

Any of you reading this magazine do so because you love off-road riding and, most likely, motocross in particular so we don't have to bang on about how demanding the sport is or the dedication it demands. From the bloke on the street who spends his week repairing boilers or fitting windows all the way up to Antonio Cairoli – every one of us who rides an off-road bike does it because we love it and live for the weekend. If we didn't, we wouldn't.

Of course, you can argue that for the pros it's their job and not all of us like what we do and they should be thankful they're doing what they love for a living. Fair enough. But if that living requires total commitment and financially you're getting bugger all in return then it won't be long before you realise your job is actually nothing more than a glorified hobby. That's when you have to be realistic and work out if the effort you're putting in warrants the returns you're getting. >>

special feature

After years in the GPs, James Noble's enjoying a new-found domesticity



James Noble, after the best part of his career on the GP trail, has recently been through this thought process and decided he had to act. His decision was to quit GP racing and just concentrate on racing at home in as many races as he can.

"The times have changed – just horrendously really. You have to pay 1000 Euros each time you go to a GP just to start off with and with all the travelling expenses and no prize money it's just not feasible. If you can stay home and earn a little bit of money as opposed to spending money and spend more time at home with your family and friends why would you keep travelling around Europe? It's a no-brainer really. You may as well spend more time at home and earn more money.

"If someone pays you well enough to go and ride a bike – like 40 to 50 grand a year with bonuses for the risks we have to take – then that's a no-brainer too. But those deals are few and far between now."

Obviously, for a lot of professional UK riders staying at home also benefits their sponsors. After all are they really getting the exposure they expect for their investment if their rider isn't pushing for the lead and getting the TV time that GPs have to offer? Is there really any point investing in a rider who's going to be riding around a track on the opposite side of the continent and you only know he's there because

the void in your bank balance tells you so?

James has a loyal handful of personal and local sponsors that help him and it's something he's very aware of.

"I don't know where I'd be if it wasn't for them, I certainly wouldn't be able to race at the level I do without them that's for sure. They just love motocross and although they'd come and support in me at a GP, it's probably better for them if I stay in the UK and do well here for the same reasons it is for me. It's easier and right now we're probably both getting a better return."

All this rings true for Noble's now ex-MVR-D Suzuki team-mate Carl Nunn who after spending virtually all of his professional career travelling around as part of the GP circus has also knocked it on the head. Unlike a rider such as, say, Brad Anderson who would love a more regular shot at GPs as he reaches his prime, Noble and Nunn have made the decision to leave world championship racing behind on their own accord rather than being forced out because they can't cut it. It's a decision Carl didn't take lightly but is more than comfortable with.

"I'm 100 per cent happy with my call. The first GP I missed I watched on the internet and was thinking 'maybe I should still be there' because the only other time I haven't been at one is when I've been injured but then when the one after that came around I didn't miss it at all. I watched it and felt comfortable doing that, I then just went

straight back to spending time with my kids and that was really nice.

"I now have time to work on the house after loads of years of not having the time. It became a slog because, let's face it, I'm not getting any younger and that's hard enough as it is but when you're not getting the right kind of money to do it anymore it's not worth the risk or effort.

"If I'm honest the travelling was one of the major factors too, I just felt completely burnt out with it. I could still live with that if I was earning really good money to support the family but for the time I'm away and what I'd get from it I'd rather be at home with them."

Some would argue that the writing was on the wall for Nunn anyway – maybe even James too – and he was past his prime at GP level and should've stepped down regardless but that's hardly justified. Especially as Carl took the opportunity to compete in his home GP and ended up the best British rider overall in MX1, just missing out on the top 10 with a solid performance. In fact, since Carl's made the decision to quit GPs and step up to the 450 you could say he's finding the form once again that finally earned him that overdue first British championship in 2005.

Maybe he's got the spark back in his riding because of his decision to stay at home? Could it be that because he's happier and settling into a more everyday family routine >>



"I don't think my attitude to racing is any different, I do know that I'm enjoying every time I'm on the bike now though"



Carl Nunn's still got the pace to score GP points but the cost of competing - plus the time away from home - has become prohibitive

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it reflects in his performance?

"Yeah, I think that could be the case. I don't think my attitude to racing is any different, I do know that I'm enjoying every time I'm on the bike now though. I'm enjoying all the different championships that I'm racing in the UK as each race I enter now I have a very good chance of winning. When I'd line up at GPs I'd know I was up against a lot of good riders – most of them younger and on factory bikes – and as much as I'd believe I could win I'd have to maybe take risks that I no longer wanted to take to achieve that."

Of course, with the arrival of the MCF's Red Bull Pro Nationals the domestic British scene has been given a huge kick up the arse and now along with the Maxxis British, MMX Open and Masters championships there's more than enough racing at home for our troops rather than fighting a battle in a foreign land.

Some would argue that too many separate series cancel each other out and don't necessarily make the sport grow but Nunn and Noble don't see it that way. They believe that with the likes of Red Bull getting behind the MCF it can only help raise the bar for the others to match or better and then the domestic scene will be flourishing again.

"I'm loving racing more in the UK again," says Carl. "I'm getting to ride tracks that I haven't ridden for a while so that's a fresh incentive for starters. Obviously, the separate championships have to be careful they don't tread on each other's toes with date clashes as they move forward but it's nice to know that while there may be a GP on somewhere we'll still have a really good race somewhere in the UK for those pros who can't get a GP ride."

"I think the Pro Nationals prove that – especially with all the best riders in the one race, although I wouldn't be saying that if I was on a 250F and getting roosted by the 450s! Of course money talks too but what I've liked about the Pro Nationals so far is that we're riding well prepared tracks and that's a big plus point. They need to be good because after all we are out there taking big risks, it's hardly the safest sport in the world as it is. For me a big part of the satisfaction and enjoyment is a decent track and right now MCF seem to understand that more than anyone."

Noble feels the same way and has become increasingly frustrated down the years with track preparation in the UK, even to the point where he's taken a hands-on approach and worked with the Whitby club to build a course that generates good racing and gives the riders and fans what they want.

"I feel like the tracks are always the last thing on the list, well, until the Red Bull Pro Nationals this year anyway. I know it's hard for the clubs because they're mostly independent and have to work a very tight budget and are mostly volunteers. I know because that because of my involvement with the Whitby club. So usually the first thing the clubs put off is spending money on the track."

"Don't get me wrong, I understand why – money is tight and it's maybe okay for a club event but at national events if the sport is ever going to grow the tracks have to be better prepared, better presented and promoted better and I honestly think the Pro Nationals are doing that. We're not looking for major revamps, just small changes and listening to feedback from the riders to make improvements. Just to see people trying to make a change is refreshing because if you have a better track for riders you'll have a better track for the spectators too."

"I think having one crew that has experienced modern professional racing organising all the races rather than a different club for each major event is better because you get consistency and continuity. Like the supercross in the US – it's a crew that goes around and sets up at each event and you can see it works."

>>>



"If someone pays you well enough to go and ride a bike then that's a no-brainer – but those deals are few and far between now"





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Certainly there are suddenly more options for an aspiring young racer in the UK. Maybe now with all these domestic championships we're getting to the point where you can make a reasonable living in the UK by racing motocross like you can as a regional professional in America? If only we had contingency money from the manufacturers like over the pond too but this isn't likely to happen anytime soon, especially with the world still in the firm grasp of a financial meltdown.

That's not to say it can't though. If these series start pushing each other along and – the Holy Grail – pushing through into the mainstream media then manufacturers and virtually all the industry then have more reason to invest. Perhaps that's already started with Red Bull's involvement? Let's be honest, for a company like them to invest in a UK series is a huge plus and no doubt the other energy drink companies will not want to get left behind.

The sport now has to be packaged in a

different way. National motocross meetings have to be events with a festival type feel. The Pro Nationals and the British Masters have it right by getting kids into the race programme. And having the kids around helps with the atmosphere of the event as a whole if it's managed correctly, something Carl feels is an integral part in taking the sport forward.

"The buzz has been lacking at the British championships for a while as it's all a bit too serious which it has to be a little bit because of the level of competition and what it means to the sponsors, riders and industry. But if that can be changed like it is at the Pro Nationals for example then people's opinions on the sport can too.

"People ride better when they are having fun. I don't know if it's because the kids are there or because there's music playing or what but these events seem to be more relaxed and enjoyable. It's opened my eyes as well seeing how good the younger riders are these days. When you see

them jumping what we're jumping on an 85 it's quite impressive so if they're doing that and riding the track we're riding they have more chance of making it as a pro. They can still go off and do their local club events if they feel they're out of their depth a little but at least now they have a chance to be part of a bigger show.

"I really like the Fox Boot Camp, I think that's a great idea and gives the kids something to shoot for and of course it's putting something directly back into the sport. Like the holeshot awards and the Proppa.com Van Slam race too, it's the little touches like that which make the sport more appealing to everyone."

So with veterans like Nunn and Noble coming back to graze on fresh pastures maybe the green, green grass of home could become harder to leave for budding pros as rival domestic series push each other to continually raise the bar and the world championship loses the lustre it once had? Like we said, only time will tell...

FIT FOOD!

YOU WOULDN'T PUT CRAPPY FUEL INTO YOUR BIKE SO WHY WOULD YOU PUT CRAPPY FUEL INTO YOUR BODY?

Words by Alan Milway

In this age of fast food, eating healthily may never have been so difficult. However, there is a flipside to this. Cooking programmes seem to dominate our televisions and there is growing encouragement to buy organic. Add to this the current economic climate and making – not buying – our dinner may be on the rise.

There is no doubt that a good diet makes a huge difference when it comes to our day to day life. Managing body weight, body fat, muscle development, general health, fighting illness – the list goes on about the benefits of diet on our health and the differences are just as stark when it comes to our performance when we are riding our bikes. I have discussed previously the importance of the so-called 'macro-nutrients' in energy production and recovery but how do we go about putting the theory into practice?

This is an outline of some rules to follow – from the casual amateur to the committed professional there are some very useful tips to staying healthy, staying energised and coming off the track knowing you've been able to ride hard for the full moto.

1 BE COLOURFUL!

A lot of people feel the need to supplement their diet with multi-vitamins. All of the essential vitamins and minerals we need come naturally from the food we eat and typically by eating a wide variety of naturally coloured food we will maintain a good balance. Vitamins and minerals contribute to immunity, recovery and energy production so are vital for both everyday life and racing or training. Look at your dinner – it should be easy to have three or four colours on the plate at least and if it looks dull there's a good chance it is missing some nutrition!

Examples: Blueberries, cherries, peppers, plums, spinach – the list goes on...

2 THE FEWER LEGS THE BETTER!

This might sound strange but there is a good logic to this. Protein is vital for muscle growth, cell repair and recovery. We get the majority of our protein from animals and, typically, the fewer legs the animal has the better the source of protein. The more legs the animal has the more selective you need to be about how often you consume it.

Examples: Fish (no legs), chicken and turkey (two legs), then consider more carefully pork products and red meats from our four-legged friends.

3 GO WHOLEMEAL!

Simply put, try to choose the least processed forms of carbohydrates. The less refined the food is, the closer it is to the state from which it came from the ground and the better it is for your body.

Examples: Change to brown bread and wholemeal pasta.

4 EAT GOOD FATS!

Fats are a positive aspect to our daily diets and although they get bad press they should form 20-30 per cent of our daily diet. However, saturated animal fats consumed through fast food, red meats etc need to be reduced in favour of good fats. Essential fatty acids are also very important and help reduce inflammation and joint pain.

Examples: Raw nuts, seeds, olive oil, fish (such as sardines, trout, pilchards etc).

5 MAKE SURE YOU EAT BREAKFAST!

It sounds obvious but too many people avoid breakfast. I had to alter my morning to cater for some breakfast –

it might mean leaving for work when you'd normally have a cup of tea at home and then eating when you get to work. However you work it, you need to feel like eating and you need to eat breakfast!

Examples: Porridge is easy in the microwave, fruit juice and cereal or at least some toast and honey with a banana will set you up for the day better than two cups of tea and then a Mars Bar at 10am!

6 STAY THREE HOURS APART!

Many people eat sporadically or find themselves hungry, snack on fast food then get hungry again before a big dinner. Avoiding this hunger and keeping consistent energy levels can be attained by changing the classic three meals a day approach. Try eating smaller meals that contain the three main nutrients (carbohydrate, protein and fat) every three hours. It will help maintain energy throughout the day so you will feel like going to the gym after work or during lunch break. This will all make healthier eating easier and reduce those fast food snacks!

Examples: Breakfast at 7am, small meal at 10am, lunch at 1pm then small meal at 4pm before dinner at 7pm. Preparing salads with chicken or healthy sandwiches or pasta pots before work or in an evening takes literally 10 minutes and will make a huge difference.

7 RECOVERY NUTRITION IS KEY!

Many people work hard in the gym but then neglect to sufficiently re-fuel after exercise. This may be because their primary reason for exercise is to lose weight or it might be down to forgetfulness or lack of thought. Either way you need to re-fuel with suitable food and drink following exercise. It will help recovery, muscle development and give maximum training gains.

Examples: A pint of milk is ideal following exercise. Drink one as soon as you finish then combine protein and carbohydrate in a meal within an hour of finishing (as soon as you get home is ideal). Having something with you ready to eat after exercise, or modifying your journey home to go past a supermarket will help you not miss out on the gains from hard training.

8 DRINK! DRINK! DRINK!

It is all too easy to neglect water intake and become dehydrated throughout the day. If you go into a riding session or training session dehydrated it's very hard to keep a good effort going and performance can rapidly deteriorate. Water, fruit juice or non-caffeinated and low-calorie drinks should be on the list. There is debate as to whether tea and coffee should contribute to your daily water intake – my opinion is to limit these drinks to a max of four per day and not include them in guidelines to encourage water intake.

Examples: Refill a 500ml mineral water bottle and use this to keep track of water intake. Leave in the fridge overnight or add ice cubes to make it taste better – drink two in the morning, have a drink with lunch, then drink two in the afternoon before dinner. I would advise approx two litres of water per day and add another litre for every hour of exercise.

9 SUPPLEMENT ONLY IF YOU NEED TO!

Supplements are often seen as a crutch and people use them as a reason to continue with poor diets. This attitude is wrong and supplements should only be seen as a

means to add to or 'supplement' what you are already doing well. However, if there are times when you are not able to take in sufficient vitamins or minerals (such as when travelling) then supplements will help. This also is the case with fatty acids. Supplementing the diet with 'weight gain', 'muscle bulk' or 'protein shakes' is generally not advised as often sufficient protein is easily attainable through a normal, good diet. It is also a darn sight cheaper and there's not the risk of taking something you may later regret.

Examples: Have a bottle of multivitamins at home but aim not to use them unless necessary. Buy in fruit instead as adding a piece of fruit to each meal is better than adding a tablet to the meal.

10 BUY A COOK BOOK AND MAKE LIKE AINSLEY!

As mentioned at the start of the article, there are many cooking programmes on the TV and often these inspire. Don't leave it to the missus or your mum to use the recipes – get in the kitchen! It doesn't need to take long or be expensive to cook good, nutritious food. After all, you are then in complete control of what goes into the food you eat, can control the calories that you are putting into your body and are more likely to enjoy your meals!

Examples: Try a simple meal from scratch such as a fish pie or make a cereal bar to take to work – easy to do and far better tasting than any packaged versions!





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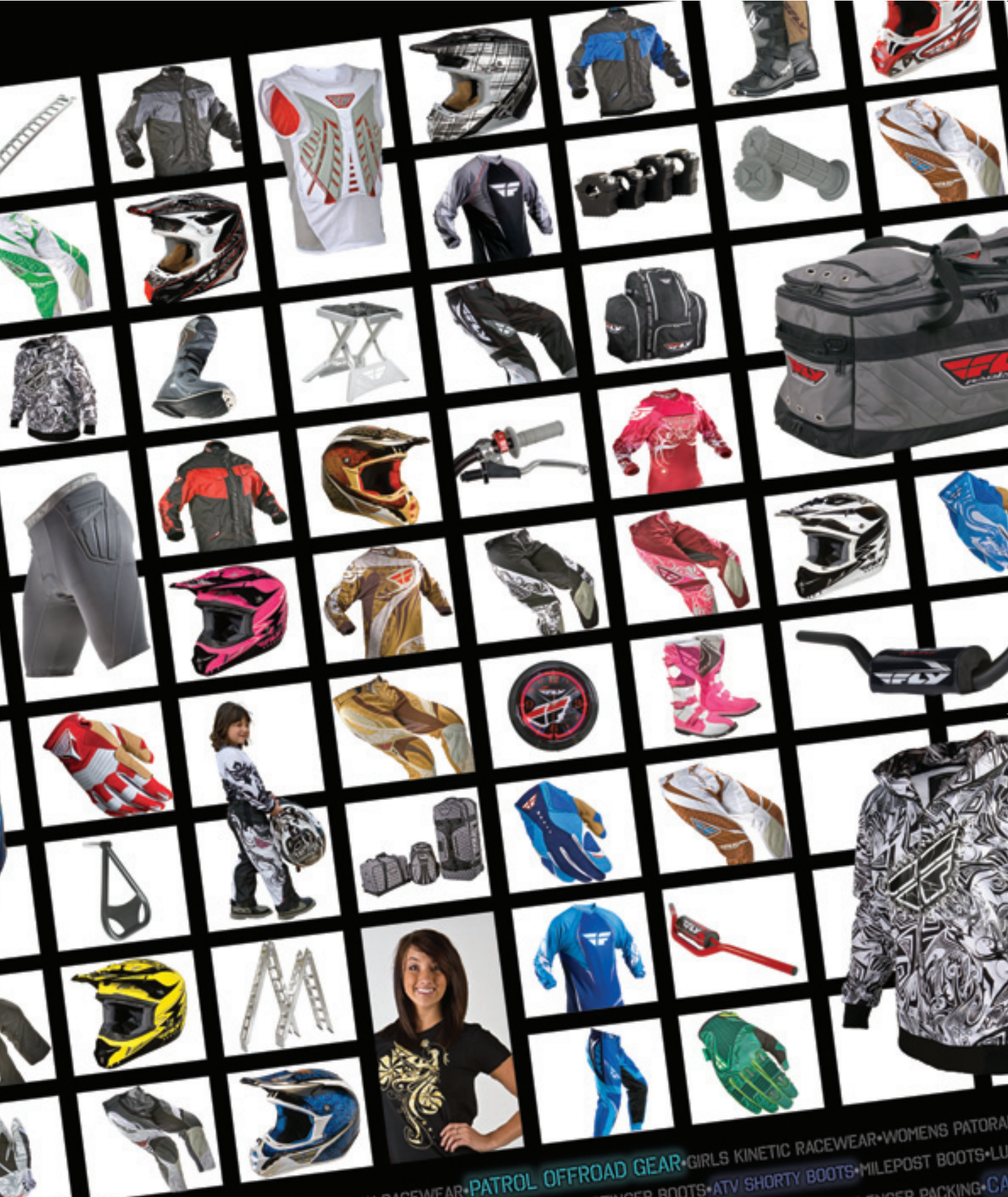
Alan Milway is a qualified sports scientist who runs MX Fitness specialising in training motocross and enduro riders. For more information on how Alan can help you train go to his website www.mxfitness.co.uk or call him on 07810 827427



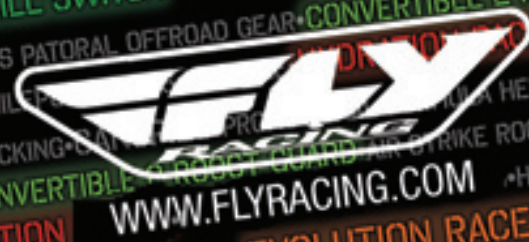
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It wasn't all that long ago there was serious doubt whether Christophe Pourcel would even race again – now he's kicking derriere Stateside

GUTS N' GLORY!

HE'S STILL NOT FULLY RECOVERED FROM THE CRASH THAT ALMOST ENDED HIS CAREER TWO YEARS AGO BUT IT HASN'T STOPPED CHRISTOPHE POURCEL KICKING ASS STATESIDE...

Monster Energy/Pro Circuit Kawasaki's Christophe Pourcel has been amazing this year. He won the Lites East Supercross Championship, the East/West Shootout, at the time of writing has won two of the four AMA Nationals run so far and sits in the points lead there as well.

And the thing is, he's doing all of this while still feeling some effects from his 2007 paralysation and after spending nearly 18 months out of racing between his Irish GP crash and the beginning of this season. We talked to him about how far he's come.



STATESIDE

Steve Cox is an American moto-journalist who follows the entire AMA SX/MX tour. Since moving on from US weekly Cycle News he's struck out on his own to do the freelance thing and recently became one of

Racer X's editors at large. He knows the sport and its personalities like few others and as our US Editor provides insight straight from the Stateside scene...

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DBR: Tell us a little bit about how your trip to the USA in 2007 came about...

CP: "I was in Europe and we talked about me coming to the USA and I wanted to get some experience and maybe get a podium or something like that so when I was waiting for my deal for the next year we talked to Mitch [Payton, of Pro Circuit] about doing some races and it turned out pretty good for me. When you come here the first time it's never easy. Everything's different. But I loved it and I was really happy that I did it."

DBR: You were second in the first race to Ryan Villopoto and then you won the second race after he got a bad start...

CP: "The first time I went to the track with them I had a pretty good day and I had the same speed as them so that was pretty good, to think about the podium or something like that. Then I went to the first race and Ryan [Villopoto] was really fast and I let him past and I finished second. I was really happy to get my first podium in the US."

"It's just awesome when you can do something like that. It's a dream when you're a little boy. Then I got my first win. I knew during the week when I was at the track with those guys that I could win so I just gave it everything I had. I got a good start and it was a good way to get it – to get away and win it. I led the race really easily and just tried to ride smooth. I was like 'don't crash, baby!'"

DBR: Then you sat out Anaheim II after that. Did you fracture your leg?

CP: "Yeah, I broke my leg down at the bottom of the leg."

DBR: So you have a broken leg and you have to worry about getting ready for the GPs to defend your 2006 title?

CP: "Yeah, I was already thinking about that. The plan was to do the first three races with Mitch and then go back to France and make the GPs. I broke my leg so I just went back then."

DBR: If I remember correctly you were accused of not really trying in the GPs when you were defending your title against Antonio Cairoli. What was going on?

CP: "It's never easy to keep a title after you win it but I wasn't really good that year anyway. My physical condition wasn't very good and Cairoli rode really good. But I still got some good results – I was second a lot and was on the podium a lot and got some wins. But, for sure, I was focused on the USA and I had already signed so in my mind I had already moved on in a way."

DBR: But then you had that huge crash...

CP: "I was just really confident following the race the week before and in the practice that I crashed in I was really fast. On the biggest jump – about 30 metres long – some guys crashed and the flagman didn't show me anything. I don't know what they were doing. I wasn't really happy about that. You're at the world championship and nobody's working close enough to the track to show you if someone else just crashed. I jumped this big jump and I landed on his bike and had a really big crash."

DBR: So what exactly did you damage?

CP: "It was the end of the sacrum where it curls forward – it touched my nerve so I was paralysed from my waist down to about mid-thigh. I had a long surgery to fix it – about seven or eight hours – and before I went into surgery they told me the odds were about 70 per cent in favour of me staying paralysed."

"I mean, I could walk so that was really pretty good news but it wasn't good news to hear that I wasn't going to be able to be with any girls anymore or that I wouldn't be able to have a little boy of my own some day. So I just sat in the bed and made up my mind that we were going to do it. There was no other choice. We went into surgery and it went pretty well but it still took seven or eight months before I could go to the restroom again."

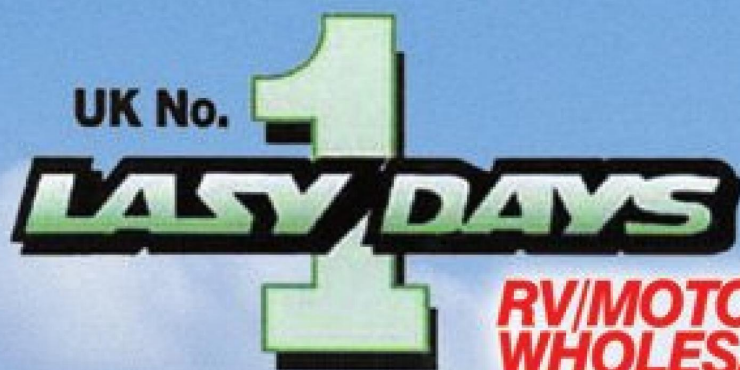
DBR: At Bercy you didn't look good at all...

CP: "I lost too much weight. I had lost something like 15 kilos and I was still paralysed so it wasn't easy for me to think about getting on a bike again. But over time I got on my feet and started to build some muscle back and then I got back on the bike. I thought if I liked to be on the bike I'd work on it and try to see if I could come back to racing or not."

DBR: What was going through your head when you were lying in the hospital?

CP: "I wasn't thinking about the bike. I was just staring at the walls. It sucked. I couldn't move my ♦

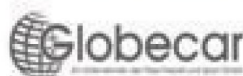




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waist for almost three months and that's when I lost all of that weight. I didn't think about the bike at all. My stomach was so bad. When you can't go to the restroom, I think it's one of the worst things you can imagine. It's hard to think of something like that being so horrible until it happens to you."

DBR: Did that help you with perspective on life?

CP: "The first thing I was thinking was if I was going to be okay in everyday life, not about the bike. That's what's so different in your mind. It changes how you look at things. It's not the same anymore."

DBR: What about in your racing today? Does it change how you look at it?

CP: "You're just more focused and you really think about avoiding stupid crashes in races. You can finish third sometimes and that's okay. You finish, you get a podium but you realise you can get first but it's okay to get third sometimes. You go back to your house and you get on with life."

DBR: How did your injury affect your family?

CP: "My father was with me when I crashed and he's still really bad about it. He doesn't want to speak about it when we speak. When I bring it up, he can't say anything. He's almost crying and then he changes the subject. It's not easy. My mother wasn't there but she was in France when I came back to get surgery. She was there when the man said it was about 70 per cent chances that I would stay paralysed. That was really bad for them. Those seven or eight months were really bad for them and for me, too."

DBR: Did you have depression?

CP: "I got something like that. I couldn't go to the restroom so I got a stomach sore that was really, really bad and then I got some sort of depression and they wanted for me to go and see someone who could help me but I wasn't really interested in doing that. I was like 'okay, I'm not crazy' but I was crazy. You don't want to be crazy but you are."

DBR: To have something taken away that is all you know, like racing was almost taken away, that would depress anyone. Before you got hurt you're world champion, making money, getting girls... Then, snap, it's done.

CP: "What can I say about that? Now, when I think about something, I know that I can be walking in the street and someone can run me over and I can die. I can think about that now. Before I couldn't. When you're young and you've got everything like before my big injury I didn't think about that because you think you're something like the best man in the world, like every young man thinks. They all think that. It's not like that anymore."

DBR: How long did it take for you to decide you wanted to race again?

CP: "The good thing about Mitch is that I wasn't really good but he always said 'okay, we've got a bike for you here if you want to come – you come and you ride if you want'. That was a good thing for me."

DBR: Does his paralysation help him to understand your situation a little better?

CP: "When I came here the first time after my injury he was like 'okay, you're going to ride before the season?' so I told him that sometimes I get sores and it's not really easy and sometimes I may not be as good as I need to be. I talked to Mitch about that and it was good because he got those, too, so he understood. It was a good thing for me to have a man like that close to me."

DBR: Were you worried you wouldn't be fast enough?

CP: "No, when I got back on a bike I was just thinking about having fun and that's it. I didn't think about speed at all. When you're hurt like that it doesn't matter for you if you're fast or not. You're just happy to be on the bike."

DBR: I heard you like to play games at the test track and not ride fast around the other riders...

CP: "I don't like to ride with everybody at the track. When you can show them that you're really, really fast you don't really want to because then you have a little secret. I like that."

DBR: I think they've figured it out by now...

CP: "Yeah but I haven't given my best yet. I'm waiting for a good race to do that and ride like I ride in practice during the week. I can ride good enough to win but there's no point in going faster than that because why



finish 20 seconds in front? Why not just finish first without the risks? You don't have to show everybody what you can do."

DBR: How did your brother handle your injury?

CP: "I was always down at the hospital anyways and he came over there to see me sometimes but not very often. It's not easy for a brother to see his brother like that. He just went and raced and he rode pretty good. But when he went to Bercy and I was there he wasn't really good about it. His friend crashed too and I wasn't really good and I think he was thinking a little bit about that – he rode just one day out of the three days and then he stopped. I think it wasn't good in his mind."

DBR: Is there a little less pressure on you now that you've proven yourself to be a winner again?


CP: "I'm happy about that. When I got back on the bike it was easy for me to go fast on the bike and to win races. When I was the world champion I

didn't ride really good compared with how I rode at the training but I got it. So I was like 'okay, if it's so easy I just have to be really focused on the bike and try really hard and I'll win the race here'. That's what I've done."

DBR: How much of the injury are you still dealing with?

CP: "I'm still paralysed a little bit and my stomach sore is still there. To go to the restroom is not really easy and I'm hoping it gets better soon. It's just going slowly. I'm beginning to get it together."

DBR: Considering what you've done to come back from such adversity what do you think of young riders who don't put a lot of effort into their racing?

CP: "I just don't want to think about them. How can you be stupid like that? I don't know what they're thinking but I think you need to have an experience like I've had to really appreciate it. You know that you're just a man, not Superman." 

F O R E I G N LEGION!

FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER NON-AMERICANS LEAD BOTH AMA CHAMPIONSHIPS WITH AUSSIE CHAD REED AND FRENCHIE CHRISTOPHE POURCEL GIVING UNCLE SAM'S BOYS A WHUPPIN'...

It's never happened before that non-Americans have led both AMA championships at the same time.

But after five rounds of racing that's exactly what's happening Stateside as Rockstar/Makita Suzuki's Chad Reed (Australian) and Monster Energy/Pro Circuit Kawasaki's Christophe Pourcel (French) have a grip on the points leads in the 450 and 250cc classes.

After a gift of a 450cc two-moto sweep at round two at Hangtown (moto two was handed to him after a penalty to Josh Grant), Reed's team-mate Mike Alessi comes into the Texas round at Freestone bubbling with confidence. With an injured Ryan Villopoto dropping out of the series at Hangtown, Alessi grabs his customary holeshot in the first moto and takes off leaving Honda Red Bull Racing's Andrew Short to fend off JGR/Toyota Yamaha's Grant for second throughout the entire moto which he does successfully.

Then comes Honda Red Bull Racing's Ivan Tedesco in fourth and Reed in fifth. Reed has a fall early in the race while running fourth but never looks like himself in the moto.

Alessi gets the start again in moto two, leading GEICO Powersports Honda's Dan Reardon, Short, TLD/Lucas Oil/PPG Honda's Jake Moss, Ryan Villopoto's replacement rider (and off-road racer) Ricky Dietrich, Chris Blose and Reed.

Reed begins to slowly work his way through the riders in front of him until he sits second. However, he doesn't even realise he's in second as his vision is blurry and his stomach pain is so severe that he considers dropping out of the moto. Luckily, Reed doesn't give in to the pain and he finishes second to Alessi who goes 1-1 in probably the most dominant performance of his entire career.

GEICO Powersports Honda's Trey Canard, from nearby Oklahoma, grabs the holeshot to start the first 250cc moto in Texas but he falls on the second lap, handing the lead to Pourcel and remounting in 11th. Pourcel is never challenged but Rockstar/Makita Suzuki's Ryan Dungey moves his way up to second by the halfway point and Canard catches up to third, passing his team-mate Brett Metcalfe for the position on the last lap.

Canard gets the start again in moto two but he's quickly joined by Dungey out front. Dungey makes the pass for the lead at the halfway point in the race and Canard hangs on for second over team-mate Blake Wharton, Pourcel, Tommy Searle, Tyla Ratray and Metcalfe. The overall goes to Dungey.

The Monday following Texas the Alessi team move

on to High Point and are riding that track to get ready for the following Saturday's race at the facility when Alessi goes off the track and hits a pole, breaking his kneecap. He's rushed into surgery but a couple days later it's leaked that he plans on racing the Colorado National in barely over two weeks.

At High Point it's Short who grabs the first moto holeshot over Reed, Tedesco, Michael Byrne, Nick Wey, Antonio Balbi and Josh Grant. Reed quickly puts Short back to second and begins to stretch his lead. Short hangs on for second after Grant passes him but falls hard. Tedesco is third, Byrne is fourth and Cody Cooper is fifth.

Tedesco gets the start in moto two in front of Short, Reed, Byrne and Jeff Alessi. It takes six laps before Reed finds his way around Short and he chases down and passes Tedesco a few laps later. However, just a couple laps from the end Reed hits an exposed root in a rut and goes down and Tedesco has nowhere to go and crashes too. Reed's up quick but Tedesco loses second to Short. Reed hangs on to win his first ever 450cc National with a 1-1 score at the same track where he scored his first ever 250cc National victory in 2002.

Pourcel grabs the early lead in the first 250cc moto and runs away with it. Pourcel is never seriously challenged. For the first six laps team-mate Jake Weimer chases him in second before two falls cause him to finish out of the points. Canard comes through for second in the moto in front of Dungey, Searle, Ratray, Wharton and the rest of the field.

Canard grabs the holeshot in moto two and Pourcel starts right on his rear wheel. Dungey starts fifth and Weimer seventh. Weimer ends up out of the points again while Pourcel pressures Canard for the entire first 30 minutes of the moto but to no avail. However, after the two take the two-lap board Canard changes lines over a jump and is kicked over the bars, breaking his wrist. Pourcel inherits the lead and wins his first second moto of the year (having won all of the first motos to that point) and takes his second overall victory with a 1-1 score. Dungey is second with Searle third.

Then comes the floodlit night race at Thunder Valley, Colorado. Alessi does indeed return to action only 19 days after his injury and, predictably, he's slow in practice and then on the first lap of the first moto he and Grant come together and Alessi is out for the day – and for the rest of the series. By Sunday morning Alessi's back in surgery re-repairing his left knee which is reportedly busted up even worse than before. ♦



AMERICAN WRAP



Broc Tickle holds down eighth in the 250cc division

Tedesco grabs the opening-moto holeshot and checks out immediately while Reed starts fifth and starts working his way forward. At the finish Tedesco takes the win over Short and Reed with Moss fourth, Grant fifth and Byrne sixth.

Tedesco does a similar disappearing act in moto two, grabbing the holeshot over team-mate Short, Byrne, Tommy Hahn, Dietrich and a few others before Reed in ninth. Tedesco again pulls away to win the moto and the overall. His 1-1 score comes via leading every single lap on the day and it's his first ever 450cc National win.

Short hangs on for second over Hahn, Byrne, Grant, Dietrich and Reed in seventh. Reed's result is largely due to his stomach ailment again, although he still believes he's close to finding an answer for it. So Reed leads the championship by 14 points with seven rounds left to run but if he doesn't get a handle on his stomach problem it may not matter.

In the altitude of Colorado, Pourcel keeps his first moto streak alive with a wire-to-wire victory. Weimer again starts second to Pourcel but this time he

holds onto the spot to the finish over Division 7/Star Racing Yamaha's Broc Tickle, Wharton, Searle, Dungey, Metcalfe, Rattray and Justin Barcia.

Moto two sees Weimer take the holeshot while Pourcel's gate actually bounces after it hits the ground, sending it up into the bottom of his motorcycle and stopping him cold. He nearly crashes but saves it before starting last.

After two laps it looks like Weimer's luck is continuing on from High Point as he crashes out of the lead on lap three, handing the spot to Barcia over Martin Davalos. Weimer gets up in third but he immediately puts on a charge, passing Davalos then chasing down Barcia over the next six laps, eventually making the pass for the lead again just past the halfway point. Weimer hangs on to take his first ever AMA National moto win and his first ever AMA National overall, one race after failing to score a single point.

Barcia hangs on for second in the moto over Searle, Dungey, Metcalfe and Pourcel. Pourcel is second overall and Searle is third. With five rounds down Pourcel carries a nine-point lead over Dungey.



Battling Brit Tommy Searle fights to stay ahead of Ryan Dungey.

SERIES STANDINGS

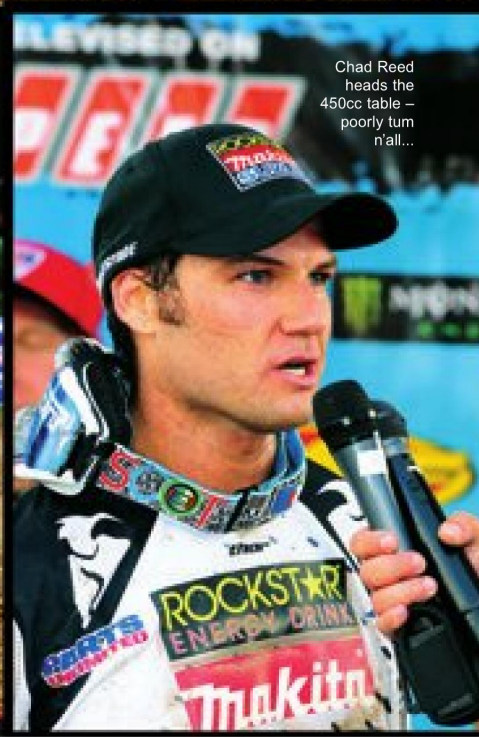
250cc

1	Christophe Pourcel	217 points
2	Ryan Dungey	208
3	Tyla Rattray	160
4	Tommy Searle	153
5	Blake Wharton	144
6	Brett Metcalfe	141
7	Trey Canard	139
8	Broc Tickle	130
9	Justin Barcia	117
10	Jake Weimer	113
16	Max Anstle	50
18	Steven Clarke	42

450cc

1	Chad Reed	195 points
2	Andrew Short	181
3	Ivan Tedesco	160
4	Josh Grant	151
5	Mike Alessi	142
6	Tommy Hahn	123
7	Michael Byrne	117
8	Cody Cooper	104
9	Ricky Dietrich	88
10	Justin Brayton	79
40	Adam Chatfield	5

Brett Metcalfe is another non-American who's taking it to the home boys



Chad Reed heads the 450cc table – poorly tum n'all...



Max is working hard, having fun and starting to string some good results together in his debut pro season

GAINING GROUND!

AFTER AN UP AND DOWN START TO THE MONTH OUR CARROT-TOPPED TORNADO FINDS HIMSELF KNOCKIN' ON THE DOOR OF A TOP 10 OVERALL FINISH – SKILLS MAX!

Words by MAX ANSTIE Photo by STEVE COX

I went into the Freestone weekend with an open mind and ready to mix it up with the big boys. The track was nice – it was kind of slick in some places with a huge sand section before the finish. In practice and timed training I put in a few good laps, unfortunately I messed up my fast lap and only got a time in to put me 18th to the line. But you know timed training isn't everything and I still had a really good gate. Another factor was the heat. Keeping hydrated was going to be key and I felt ready.

I didn't get out the gate too well and found myself at the back of the pack in the first moto. Working my way through really built my confidence both with the other riders and with the bike. An eventual 15th in moto one was okay – I felt I learnt a lot and really wanted to mix it up in the next one.

And I got an amazing jump out of the gate in moto two which put me in the lead going into the first turn. I dug it in hard but still went a little wide and slipped back to third behind Wharton. I battled it out with all the front runners to eventually finish up 10th – a really good ride for me and I showed myself that I can ride with those guys. I was starting to feel like I belong out there and to be honest I've been having loads of fun riding these races and couldn't wait until the next weekend.

So onto Mt Morris and firstly the track was amazing! It was the first time I'd ever been to that part of the country and if it wasn't for the weird humidity you would think that you were at a Severn Valley meeting with the setting around the track. The track itself was more or less exactly the same as Matterley Basin – big jumps and soft rutty bumps that made it really hard to go fast.

First training went okay, I was finding it hard to

get used to the track but I think most of that was a mental thing. In the end I ended up going to the line in 18th. Everyone was so close in times and I felt confident that I was going to get out to a good start which I did and charged hard into the first corner. Coming into the next few turns I was in about fifth. I pushed hard but was struggling a little and eventually went back to 14th. The track was rough and kind of technical and I think the hardest thing to do would have been to slow down and relax and that was what I needed to do to make me go faster. With a bad second moto eventually leading to me having to pull off I was feeling a bit s**t.

Even though I obviously wanted to do well, everyone has bad days. You can't take away what I've done and the speed I've got when I feel good and it's not as if I've jumped in the shallow water going to race a British championship. These are the fastest 250F riders in the world and just to be out there is a great accomplishment. I haven't even had a year's experience on big bikes so I think when I get a little older and stronger everything will come together. I'm just taking every weekend as it comes and learning from every experience.

We made the effort to head out to Thunder Valley in Colorado early to get used to the altitude and environment. I had raced on the track only a month before for a Loretta Lynn's qualifier before we were 100 per cent sure I was going pro and I felt quite at home on the track. I had also been working with a nutritionist and really been making progress with my training. I realise now that things do change when you turn pro! I always used to think that at the races all the riders turned into pro p***s – they don't ever talk and are so serious. But with all the training and

focus that has to go into getting every last bit out of the track I can now understand why. And plus we're not racing for trophies anymore.

But anyway I put in a good ride in timed training and was sat in 11th with my bestest mate Tommy in 12th – ha ha! I had been working on my starts loads and as the bikes go so slow in Colorado with the altitude we were all having to run a first gear start. I made it work and found myself running in about fifth. For the next four laps I was riding good and actually didn't lose any positions – at one point I went in to pass Metcalfe and nearly went down. This put me back a little and trying to gap the people behind me while trying to catch the riders in front meant I started to rush and make some little mistakes and found myself off line and slowly slipping backwards. After a pretty good ride I ended up in 12th.

Another all right start put me up there in the second one. I think I was in about seventh and for a good couple of laps I was the only thing between Dungey and Pourcel but pushing hard I made a mistake on the landing of a step-up and as I slid out I saved it but shot across the track and went from seventh to like fourth – ha ha! But later on down the next straight I slowed down and let some of the guys back by. From then on I was pushing hard and had a few battles here and there with Tyla and Wharton. I finished up in 13th but got 11th overall – my best result so far!

After that weekend a lot of doors opened up for me and I understand a lot more now about this pro stuff. We are working hard and I'm looking forward to next week...

Max

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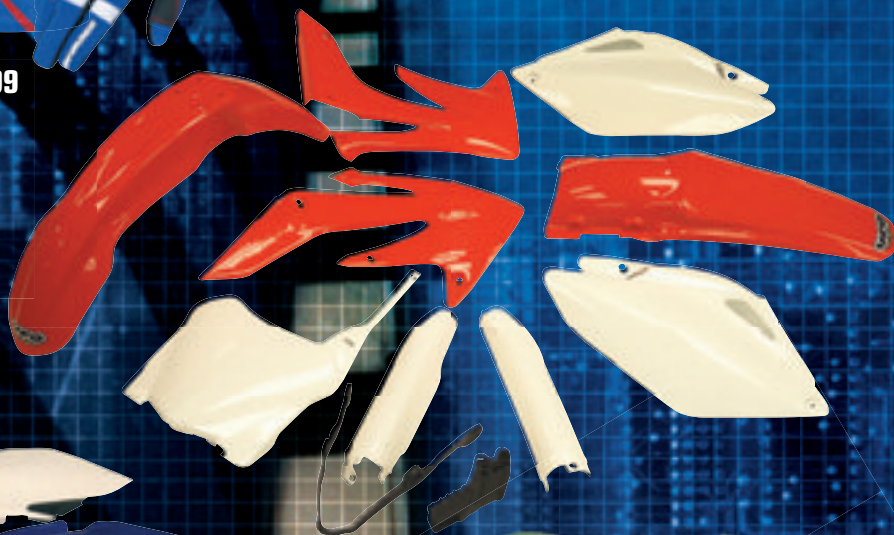
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Chad was a surprise addition to the 450 class outdoors – and with Villopoto and Alessi out he's leading the series

CHAD TIDINGS!

OUR INDUSTRY INSIDER BRINGS US UP TO SPEED WITH REED...

Words by STEVE MATTHES Photo by STEVE COX

I thought it would be a good time to check in with Rockstar/Makita Suzuki's Chad Reed to see how his assault on the 450 Nationals is going...

DBR: Let's talk about the decision to race the motocross season which caught a lot of people by surprise – what was behind it?

CR: "I guess my Australian series taught me a lot. I had a lot of fun and was around the people that I grew up with racing. I was actually team-mates with Cameron Taylor over there and when I turned pro in '98 he was my team-mate then. It was funny because I was, like, 16 and he was probably 25 or 26 and I remember thinking 'man what a dinosaur' and there we were – in 2008 – and I'm still team-mates with him.

"I felt like I did sell myself short as far as the racing goes. Some of the political side of the sport had taken over and being at Yamaha, I think I got worn out. I loved being there as far as the people are concerned but I didn't like some of the things that I could or couldn't do. Suzuki seems low-key and I love working with Roger.

"They call him 'The Man' for a reason y'know? I don't feel like I have a girlfriend that I have to check in with all the time, he lets me do my thing and get ready the way I know how to. I don't have to justify my every move, he gives his opinion and leaves it at that. He gives you the tools and lets you make the most of it and if it doesn't work out he hires the next guy."

DBR: So we're into the outdoors and you've had your work cut out for you with bad starts and eating some roost but you've managed to win an overall. Are you still having fun?

CR: "I really am. Serious. I expected to come in and do well, I've been on the box a few times and I know the kids are fast and know how to ride. It's a long series and a lot can happen between now and the end. Really, I'm stressing kind of. Everyone around me is getting used to me racing motocross and I still think Roger and some of the guys on the team question if I really want to be here."

DBR: I really question it as well...

CR: "Yeah, you too! Everybody wants to question it. I got off the plane from Australia on a Wednesday and showed up at Glen Helen on a Thursday. It was hot, crappy, dusty and I have a smile on my face. I kind of look at the track and say that it's not my favourite track but it's what I signed up for. I'm committed all the way. All the guys are like 'don't you wish you were on the boat or jetskiing?' and I'm like 'nope, this is what I signed up for'. I've been there and done that and I want to focus on racing and winning. Some of the kids are getting a little cocky and it's time to bring them down a bit now. I'm going to try."

DBR: I really believe that when you were racing outdoors the last time against RC and KW your steel-framed YZ450 was not as good as the Hondas and now you're going to have an equal bike. You agree?

CR: "Oh yeah, for sure. You were there then and people have to respect that. You were working on those bikes and that plays a bit of a role in why I'm back. I feel this bike is one of the best ones out there and that it's going to be fun to ride. I knew the first two races were going to be tough but I really believe that I could've won but I'm not heartbroken that I didn't. I think at both races I proved that I was fast but I just didn't pull it off.

"I'm first in the points and it's the outdoors, anything can happen. I have to work on my starts and my first 10 minutes. I feel good and I feel like my speed and technique is coming around, the pace of the guys didn't surprise me or anything. My feeling for the track when it's wet and nasty is what surprised me. That's what I lost in all that time away."

DBR: Like you don't trust your tyres or your bike to hook up in certain spots?

CR: "Yeah, exactly. I feel like my ability to see what it is and trust it is what I lost. I don't think that is something that I've ever been strong at actually. So it's not too bad really, racing these outdoors is

going to make me a better supercross rider next year as well. I'm going to get practice in that area! I can bring it next year and win when it's wet or dry. My decision has a lot of reasoning behind it and it's a matter of putting my head down and make something happen.

"Before Glen Helen I tested twice and spent 10 days at home and in no fashion was I at home training and getting ready for the outdoors [laughs]. I was not pounding out motos like the other guys but that's going to be my key at the end, I'll be into it at the end. I feel like these kids don't have a clue how to train and that I'll get them when we crest halfway point of the season. That's where my training will come in."

DBR: What about your stomach problem that seems to be rearing its head here and there?

CR: "Yeah, it's real frustrating for sure. I've seen five doctors already and going to a sixth. It's just hard for me to eat anything, hard for me to keep anything down and I threw up in Colorado during the second moto. I'm not sure what it is but we'll keep working on it and I hope it's nothing that will keep me out of the series."

DBR: Looking at the SX season, the Seattle supercross really hurt you and I suppose that would be one that you would want back?

CR: "Yeah but Seattle was just really the end result of how I was throughout the midpart of the year. It's just that it caught up with me in Seattle. I wasn't feeling good, I started so strong and then it went to s**t. I got kind of sick there and couldn't really eat and drink everything that I wanted to. I had some kind of stomach bug and it affected me. I lost a bunch of weight. It's not excuses, they're facts.

"Unfortunately, I'm seeing this problem spill into the outdoors and I'm not pumped about that. The second race was a bit better than the first race and I'm working with the doctors to get it sorted out. I'll have my finger wrapped around it soon and then start going for the win."



THE WHEEL DEAL!

THE WHEELS ON MY BUS WENT ROUND AND ROUND BUT LOOKED LIKED POOP SO THERE WAS ONLY TWO OPTIONS – FORK OUT A FORTUNE ON A NEW PAIR OR GET THE OLD ONES PIMPED RIGHT UP...

Words and photo by Sutti

Since its invention some five-and-a-half thousand years ago the wheel has become an integral part of modern life and something we, the human race, would probably struggle without. Imagine having to walk somewhere for instance or trying to enjoy your morning brew without a Wagon Wheel – it'd be a chuffing nightmare! You may or may not have noticed but dirt bikes have wheels too and amazingly, even though it's knocking on a bit now, the Shed of Dread (my rather fetid but fetching 1996 model Honda CR250) came as standard with a pair.

Stock Honda wheels are some of the best around and even though this particular pair are over 13 years old and have seen more use than Paris Hilton's pink purse they're still surprisingly sturdy! But dependable as they are, I figured that with the huge amounts of love and attention that are being lavished on each and every other part of the SoD I'd kinda look a little ridiculous sporting something so secondhand looking on my ride. After mulling it over I finally figured I either had to splash out some cash on a new pair or get the originals refurbished.

Central Wheel Components (www.central-wheel.co.uk) in Coleshill on the east side of Birmingham were able to offer both options – either a very nice pair of brand new SM Pro jobbies at a very reasonable price or a total revamp of my own hoops. Because we're all about the environment here at DBR – you should see how many cans and bottles we recycle each month – I chose the refurb option and after seeing some of Central Wheel's work online I knew I'd made the right decision!

Wheel building is a dying art with fewer and fewer reputable builders in the business as the majority of them are either retired or of that age. And despite what you might think wheel building is not as easy as lacing up your hubs and rims with spokes and then simply tightening them up, there are all sorts of considerations to take into consideration such as offsets and stuff. Luckily for me – and the SoD – Central Wheel really know their shiznit when it comes to wire spoke wheels so I was able to leave the whole job in their capable hands.

After they received them in the post their first step involved measuring the wheels' offset. Just in case you care the 1996 CR250 front wheel has an offset of 27mm and the rear 33mm. With those all important distances measured it's simply then a case of cutting out all the old battered looking nipples and spokes and then binning the lot. The aged bearings were also removed from the hubs and chucked in the bin as well.

At this point the naked hubs and rims were shot blasted. This allows Mark Whitfield and the team to check them for cracks and other damage but also gives a great surface for the coatings to adhere to. Central Wheel are able to offer all kinds of crazy colours for their powder coating services but this job required something classy. Mark reckoned he knew just the thing so I left it up to him and hoped that his idea of classy was the same as mine – luckily it was!

Mark decided a metallic red powder coat would look good on the hubs with gloss black for the rims. While powder coating stuff black is a relatively simple process the metallic red requires a chrome base before a translucent top coat is added.

After being left to dry completely, new bearings were fitted into the hubs before Reece laced them to the rims using brand new stainless steel spokes and nipples. After the boy wonder with the naughty calendar had worked his magic they were then handed over to his colleague Paul who trued them up and ensured the offset was correct before packaging 'em up and sending 'em back to DBR HQ – happy days!

The finished product looks stunning and the job Central Wheel have carried out has completely transformed the SoD's wheels. The next stage is to find a suitable pair of high performance tyres. I'm thinking Michelin S12s – which are probably my favourite motocross tyres of all time – possibly with the NueTech TuBliss system inside rather than mousse inserts... Not exactly '90s technology but who'll ever know? Mwahahahaha...





FRY-UP!

A COOKED CLUTCH IS GOING TO HAPPEN TO ALL OF US AT SOME TIME OR ANOTHER BUT LUCKILY REPLACING THOSE FRIED PLATES WITH LOVELY NEW ONES IS AN IDIOT-PROOF JOB...

Photos by Suttly

Whatever the level you ride at – from pro to protozoa to pizza delivery boy – mechanical malfunctions will raise their ugly heads from time to time. Think back to this year's The Tough One when David Knight DNFed while winning when his factory Beemer's clutch let go. Or May's Dirtbike-Traxs hare scramble at Gisburn where Lawless DNFed while losing when his WRF250's clutch soiled itself.

The WRF magazine machine has been waiting forlornly ever since in the DBR secure storage area so as soon as the necessary parts arrived courtesy of the lovely Natalie at the lovely EBC Brakes it was time to crack on. Replacing clutch plates isn't a big deal and seeing as our Tech Ed Geoff Walker was otherwise engaged at the Erzberg Rodeo it fell to Lawless to step into the angry one's size 10s and get spinning the spanners. Well he bloody well broke it...





STEP001

Take your new clutch kit and soak it in some fresh motor oil as it's essential the fibre plates aren't fitted dry – never ever put them in dry because it'll just lead to a world of hurt. The EBC Dirt Racer kits like the one we're using come in a little plastic package that is very handy for this part of the job.



STEP004

Holy schnitzell! That's one cooked clutch – bad man Lawless! You can tell this clutch has got seriously hot by the burnt oil marks and stains on the outer hub. This might turn out to be more than just a normal clutch plate change but let's stick with it for now...



STEP007

With all the plates out of the way and put straight into the bin – like a burnt breakfast boo hoo! – it's time to clean the clutch hub. Use a spray cleaner – brake cleaner is ideal – and a lint-free cloth. Clean all the crud away and you'll be laughing like one horny hyena!



STEP002

Always start a job like this with a clean dirt scooter and a Bobby Dazzler haircut. When you're happy your bike is spotlessly clean – and your hair is looking fine too – then go ahead and drain the engine oil, then remove your rear brake pedal. It isn't always essential to remove the pedal but it does help you get a better view...



STEP005

Next up loosen and remove the clutch retaining bolts and springs. These aren't normally too tight so you won't have to swing on 'em like you're the king of the jungle. When the bolts and springs are removed take off the outer hub and check for any scoring or damage on the surface that sits against the outer fibre plate.



STEP008

Pop in the plates one by one – start with a fibre plate, then add a steel, then another fibre plate and so on and so on and so on. You should end up with another fibre plate on the end of your stack too as the clutch hub is the equivalent of the last steel. Got that? Good.



STEP003

Now whip out your t-bar and remove the ring of 8mm head bolts that hold on the outer clutch cover. You'll notice that the bolts are all different lengths so make a note of where each one comes from. When all the bolts are out it's time to remove the cover...



STEP006

Remove the clutch plates now. Checking them gives you a good indication of just how fried they are. This set's like a bad breakfast – burnt to a crisp!



STEP009

Fit the outer hub of the clutch and the new springs and bolts. Tighten them in a criss-cross pattern using the torque setting in your owner's manual – this is usually somewhere in the region of 20nm. Once these are tight it's time to whip on your outer cover, pop on your brake pedal and then refill the engine with the correct viscosity oil. When all that's done check the free play in your clutch cable and job's a good 'un!

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GOT A MOTORCYCLE MALFUNCTION? THEN GET IN TOUCH WITH OUR TIP-TOP TECH AND YOU COULD SORT YOUR STEED AND WIN AWESOME ISO2 SWAG – DOUBLE BONER!

Words by **Geoff Walker**

OVERFLOW!

Hi Geoff,
You advice page is great and I hope you can help me with my problem. I have a 2007 KTM 250 EXC four-stroke and enjoy riding it at my enduro club but I have always found the tank a little small and have to fill up during a three-hour event.

I now have bought and fitted a larger Clarke tank but since fitting I have found the carb leaks petrol when the engine is stopped – the petrol is leaking from the bottom overflow pipe.

I am completely at a loss as to why this is happening. I could simply turn the fuel off when the bike is stopped but would rather understand why it is happening and try to solve it correctly.

Hope you can help Geoff and keep up the good work...

Nick, via email

It sounds to me like you are just going to have to whip the carb off the weapon and give it a good service. There will be a small fragment of dirt stuck in the feed valve area of the carb which will be allowing the fuel to escape. Remove the carb completely and take off the bottom bowl then simply remove all accessible parts and jets then clean with carb cleaner and compressed air in all jet passages. Finally, remove your diaphragm cover and check the rubber pumping diaphragm for damage and dirt. Make sure you replace ALL parts as you found them and be careful not to blow any small o-rings away when you are cleaning. There is a tiny o-ring on the diaphragm cover and if it is not replaced fuel will leak from the carb. Good luck.

COSTLY HABIT

Hi Geoff,
I have a question about my uncanny knack of breaking levers every time I ride my 450 KTM. It is becoming very tiring and expensive as I seem to crash and do at least one lever every time I ride. Can you help me?

Andy, via email

I think the easiest solution is to get your mitts on some plumbers' tape (ptfe). Simply remove both your clutch and front brake levers at the handlebar clamping areas and then wrap a couple of laps of tape around the fitting area before refitting the units snugly but not too tightly. The tape will allow the levers to rotate a little bit in a crash and hopefully save you time and money with your riding. Maybe a few training schools could also help? Only joking...

Of course, there is also a more blingy route to take – isn't there always – with companies such as Sunline, Zeta and Renthal all producing super-trick parts with pivoting perches and levers designed to fold on impact before springing back all Bobby Dazzler and undamaged. They do cost a fair bit more than stock options but by the sound of it you could quickly make your money back.

BIGBORE

Dear Geoff,
I have got a 2005 KTM 85 and I got a big bore carb about three months ago. Since I put it on I've had nothing but trouble with my bike. It has blown up once and I think it's on the blink again and I don't know what to do about it. Can you help?

Aidan, via email

It sounds like your 'big bore' carb is not jetted correctly for your bike or you have an air leak in the system. The standard carb works well with the bike as it is and you should probably refit it and crack on. From memory the main jet should be around 120 but you may want to double check this. Make sure the carb is specific for the year of your bike as they may have changed a little with later models. Another thing with the KTM 85 is making sure you use new gaskets every time when you do any work. The gaskets are made to be used once and once only. They will leak and cause problems if used again.

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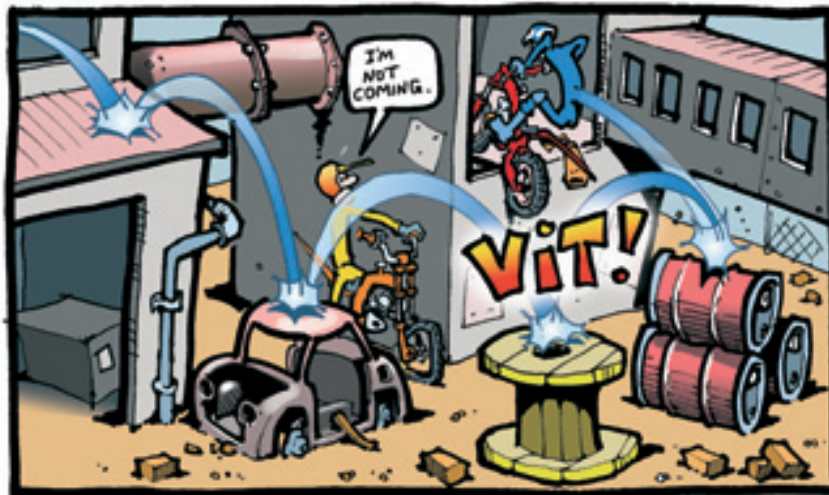
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FINAL COUNTDOWN!

AFTER ROCKING THROUGH EUROPE THERE'S JUST FIVE ROUNDS LEFT IN THIS YEAR'S WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS BUT THERE'S STILL EVERYTHING TO PLAY FOR...

Photos by Sarah Gutierrez



Mel Pocock finally breaks his GP duck with solid points in France

Even though it feels like the year has only just begun the FIM motocross world championship is unbelievably about to enter its final third following exciting rounds in France, Germany and – for the first time ever – Latvia. Although it's meant to be summer in northern Europe the sun mostly stays hidden as Ernee falls foul of showers while clouds dominate the skies further east in Teutschenthal and Kegums.

No matter what conditions are thrown at him there's no stopping T-Bone Tony Cairoli from steamrolling away from the rest of the pack in this year's MX1 championship as the #222 Yamaha rider currently sits on a massive 57-point lead with just five rounds remaining. The bad news for the chasing crowd is that in the last three GPs – France, Germany and Latvia – the speedy Sicilian has been the joint highest point scorer in the class with a haul of 130 out of a possible 150 thanks to his two moto wins, three seconds and one seventh place!

T'other MX1er to score a ton-30 is Germany's Max Nagl who moves from seventh to second in the series standings courtesy of his three moto wins, two thirds and a sixth – now that's the kind of improved performance we all dream about but only spam emails normally offer. While 57 points might be a gap too far for Max to claw back to Tony (the biggest the gap has been all year was 76 after Portugal) it's worth remembering that there's still a maximum of 250 of 'em up for grabs in the remaining rounds – two on hardpack (Sweden and Czecho), two in sand (Belgium and Holland) and one in pretty much unknown conditions (Brazil).

While it's mostly been the Max and Tony show there has been one rider who's been getting closer

Tom Church nails a spectacular holeshot in France – by this point he's probably travelled about five bike lengths more than Max Nagl



and closer to scoring his maiden moto win and in Kegums he finally does it. MX Panda Clement Desalle is currently the leading Belgian rider in the MX1 division and the 20-year-old nails that point home by passing early leader Ken De Dycker to take that all-important first win in the Latvian sand. The outspoken LS Honda rider is definitely hungry for more and it's not inconceivable that he'll sneak into the top three in the series by year end if his current form's anything to go by.

In MX2 Marvin Musquin's move to KTM has proved to be a good 'un as the Frenchman wins both races at Ernee before podiuming again in Germany and Latvia as he stretches his lead in the championship to a rather tasty 49 ahead of countryman Gautier Paulin.

Marvin's brilliance is only outshone by German wunder kind Ken Roczen who takes the overall at Teutschenthal and becomes the youngest ever GP winner in the process – at 15 years and 53 days. If Roczen had competed in the full series and been able to maintain his current average GP points score of 33.3 he'd currently be Musquin's closest challenger – not bad going for a pint-sized rookie riding a bike that before Roczen's arrival hadn't even visited a GP podium before! In fact that's Suzuki's first MX2/125cc GP win since Davey Strijbos took victory in his home GP in Holland way back in 1994 – to put it in perspective that's the year that Roczen was born!

It's a tough old month for the remaining

Brits in MX GP action but Buildbase CCM's Tom Church shines through as he scores good points in all six motos and nails a spectacular holeshot in France – sacre bleu! Team-mate Dougan's also on it and although he only finishes in the points 50 per cent of the time manages a top 10 in France and an 11th in Latvia – it seems that things are really coming together for the Bolton-based manufacturer.

Things ain't so hot over at CAS Honda with the MacKenzie clan on call as resident riders. After struggling in France and Germany with his 'poorly fumb' Billy does the smart thing and calls it quits for a wee while to allow his injuries to heal up while Bry seems to be improving on a race by race basis and notches up a very respectable 13th in Kegums' second moto. Zach Osborne's MIA but young gun Mel Pocock does the UTAG team proud by scoring GP points for the first time ever in France – 11 of 'em no less for 16th overall. Well done that man!

Jake Nicholls doesn't join Mel on the scoreboard in France but more than makes up for it with a strong showing in Germany for 12th overall. Latvia doesn't bring much luck and only five points but that's two more than team-mate Swordy manages all month as he cracks a bone in his clutch hand during quali in Germany on his return to the circuit that so nearly ended his career in 2006. The 29-year-old Scotsman misses Kegums altogether but should be back in action for Sweden which is the next race on the international calendar.

SERIES STANDINGS

MX1 >>

1	Tony Cairoli	Yamaha Red Bull De Carli	385 points
2	Max Nagl	Red Bull KTM	328
3	David Philippaerts	Yamaha Monster Energy	327
4	Josh Coppins	Yamaha Monster Energy	314
5	Clement Desalle	LS Motors Honda	309
6	Ken De Dycker	Teka Suzuki	298
7	Tanel Leok	Yamaha Red Bull De Carli	270
8	Jon Barragan	Silver Action KTM	215
9	Aigar Leok	TM Racing	167
10	Gareth Swanepoel	Kawasaki Racing Team	151
14	Billy MacKenzie	CAS Honda	103
18	Tom Church	Buildbase CCM Racing	78
21	Jason Dougan	Phoenix Tools CCM Racing	53
24	James Noble	MVR-D Suzuki	39
29	Brad Anderson	PAR Honda	24
30	Carl Nunn	MVR-D Suzuki	18
34	Bryan MacKenzie	CAS Honda	15
44	Jordan Rose	STR Honda	3

MX2 >>

1	Marvin Musquin	Red Bull KTM	371
2	Gautier Paulin	Bud Racing Kawasaki	322
3	Rui Goncalves	Red Bull KTM	301
4	Davide Guarneri	Yamaha Ricci Racing	296
5	Steven Frossard	CLS Kawasaki	264
6	Ken Roczen	Teka Suzuki	200
7	Nico Aubin	Yamaha Ricci Racing	197
8	Xavier Boog	Teka Suzuki	197
9	Manuel Monni	SC Racing Yamaha	165
10	Jeremy Van Horebeek	KTM Junior Team	157
16	Zach Osborne	UTAG Yamaha	100
17	Shaun Simpson	Red Bull KTM	97
18	Stephen Sword	Red Bull KTM UK	87
22	Jake Nicholls	Red Bull KTM UK	76
37	Mel Pocock	UTAG Yamaha	11
45	Neville Bradshaw	DB Racing Honda	2



HARD KNOCKS!

SWORDY AND SWANIE TOUGH IT OUT AS THE MAXXIS CIRCUS ROLLS UP AT HAWKSTONE...

Words and photos by Suttly

As one of the most demanding tracks in the world it doesn't take a fool to figure out that if you come to Hawkstone Park any less than 100 per cent prepared then you're going to be in a whole world of pain. But that's what more than a handful of the main Maxxis MX1 and MX2 championship contenders have to do as time and titles wait for no man which means that sore thumb, broken wrist, tweaked knee, infected bite or whatever – if you wanna keep your championship hopes alive then you're gonna have to be tougher than a two dollar steak...

With the leading pair in MX2 both suffering somewhat – Swordy's got some kind of bite/infection/rash thing going on while double Brompton winner Mattis Karro's recovering from a broken wrist – the win looks like it's more up for grabs than normal which makes the day's opening race one of the hardest fought battles ever seen in the Shropshire sand.

It's Karro who yanks the holey on his most definitely not oversize Suzuki – it was measured

in Brompton – and Swordy's right there with him but before the 29-year-old Scotsman can settle into a rhythm his Red Bull KTM UK team-mate Jake Nicholls, PAR Honda's Scott Elderfield and Relentless Suzuki's Martin Barr all come barrelling past on the opening tour. But things swing into Swordy's favour when Karro presses eject on lap four and with the other three not really in a position to threaten him for the title he can sit back and watch battle commence.

It's a wild scrap for sure with both Elderfield and Barr desperate to win – a tussle that'll eventually go the Ulsterman's way after the Kentish nipper sets the pace for much of the moto. Sword ends up third while Nicholls finishes fourth but slides into second in the series standings courtesy of Karro's DNF.

This puts The Reverend in a determined mood and after powering to a clear holeshot he takes up the lead position in the early going. After bludgeoning back a Sword attack and then stretching out a nice little lead again he goes missing in the whoop section.

It's not the infamous man-made humps that catch out Jake but rather human error as his – now ex – mechanic has forgotten to torque up the sprocket mounting bolts. Driveless, pointless and breathless as he pushes the stricken KTM back to the pits, Jake can only rue what might have been...

With his team-mate out of the running it's Swordy who inherits both the moto and overall win as he heads home super-privateer Neville Bradshaw on the scintillatingly speedy DB Racing Honda and young gun Mel Pocock on the UTAG Yamahauler who makes his Maxxis podium debut – good work Ginge!

While a Swordy win in domestic MX2 action always has to be expected – no matter what the circumstances – the Gareth Swanepoel annihilation of the 450 division surprises pretty much everyone. Swanie's dominance is such that he's only headed once all day – and that's for just two corners by Buildbase CCM Racing's holeshot meister Tom Church who's full of beans fresh on the back of his Patchquick Trophy



Mighty Tom Church yanks a mighty holey on the mighty CCM but the day belongs to Gareth Swanepoel and the #17 factory Kawasaki

brit mx wrap

SERIES STANDINGS

MX1 >>

1	Brad Anderson	PAR Homes Honda	173 points
2	James Noble	MVR-D Suzuki	142
3	Billy MacKenzie	CAS Honda	127
4	Gareth Swanepoel	KRT Kawasaki	125
5	Carl Nunn	MVR-D Suzuki	125
6	Scott Columb	Relentless Suzuki	91
7	Tom Church	Buildbase CCM	90
8	Jason Dougan	Phoenix Tools CCM	86
9	Kristian Whatley	LPE Kawasaki	77
10	Zach Osborne	UTAG Yamaha	66

MX2 >>

1	Stephen Sword	Red Bull KTM UK	175 points
2	Neville Bradshaw	DB Racing Honda	138
3	Mattis Karro	MVR-D Suzuki	123
4	Jake Nicholls	Red Bull KTM UK	117
5	Scott Elderfield	PAR Honda	110
6	Martin Barr	Relentless Suzuki	103
7	Graeme Irwin	Red Bull KTM UK	102
8	Wayne Smith	Samsung Yamaha	97
9	Shaun Simpson	Red Bull KTM	90
10	Shane Carless	Moto-One KTM	83

MX1 pace-setter Brad Anderson rides steady to keep his series lead



Scott Elderfield leads the opening MX2 race

victory – as he takes his first major win on the factory Kawasaki.

Second overall on the day is series leader Brad Anderson who extends his championship points lead by running 3-2 on the PAR Honda. "As long as I'm still holding this I'll be happy," says Brad referring to the piece of scarlet Perspex that's awarded to the red plate holder at the end of each round. With a 31-point lead over second place man James Noble at the halfway point of the eight-round championship it's gonna take something of a disaster for Ando not to be crowned champ in '09!

Although he's still feeling way less than 100 per cent, Billy MacKenzie's first moto charge is very impressive and the supercharged Scotsman even sets the fastest lap of the opening race. His thumb injury causes Billy to run at a more sedate pace in the second moto but fifth is still enough to pop the reigning champ onto the podium and also elevate himself past MVR-D's Carl Nunn – who now sits joint fourth with Swanepoel – in the series standings.



Bartosz Oblucki comes close to spoiling Johnny Aubert's perfect season on day one in Slovakia





100 PER CENT!

KNIGHT LEAVES, CERVANTES WOBBLER AND AHOLA GETS LUCKY
AS JOHNNY AUBERT BANGS OUT ANOTHER FOUR WINS TO KEEP
HIS UNBEATEN STREAK GOING...

Words and photos by Jonty Edmunds

As the '09 World Enduro Championship moves beyond the halfway stage one of the series' biggest teams does so without one of the sport's biggest stars. David Knight has officially parted company with BMW Motorrad Motorsport ending his disappointing and frustrating six-month association with the German brand.

With DK announced a free agent just days before the sixth round of the series in Slovakia the two-time world champion vowed to return to the series later in the season but only when he's good and ready. "I'm not going to rush things and I don't see a lot of point racing in Mexico but my plan is to race in Greece and France," explains Knight.

With Knight having been unable to make a run for the E3 championship it's Spaniard Ivan Cervantes who remains at the top of the class standings, despite failing to make the podium on either day on Slovakia. After winning both days at the GP of Finland the Spaniard's results just one week later in Puchov do little to please the KTM factory rider. "I'm still leading the championship which is good but not by as many points as I was. I finished as the best four-stroke rider in Slovakia, with so much mud that was the best I could do."

The toughest and certainly the wettest event of the championship so far, the GP of Slovakia sees Gas Gas rider Christophe Nambotin claim his first double win of the season, reducing Ivan's championship advantage to just 17 points. "It is going to be hard to catch Ivan but I know that in the mud I can win," comments Nambotin. "I need good results at each of the three remaining races now."

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SERIES STANDINGS

ENDURO 1 >>

1	Mika Ahola	Honda	247 points
2	Antoine Meo	Husqvarna	208
3	Simone Albergoni	KTM	203
4	Thomas Oldrati	KTM	173
5	Eero Remes	KTM	153

ENDURO 2 >>

1	Johnny Aubert	KTM	250 points
2	Bartosz Oblucki	Husqvarna	188
3	Juha Salminen	BMW	181
4	Joakim Ljunggren	Husaberg	177
5	Rodrig Thain	TM	142
16	Si Wakely	Husqvarna	44

ENDURO 3 >>

1	Ivan Cervantes	KTM	227 points
2	Christophe Nambotin	Gas Gas	210
3	Samuli Aro	KTM	202
4	Seb Guillaume	Husqvarna	196
5	Marcus Kehr	KTM	156
11	David Knight	BMW	45

ENDURO JUNIOR >>

1	Oriol Mena	Husaberg	244 points
2	Jeremy Joly	Honda	194
3	Benoit Fortunato	Yamaha	165
4	Mirko Gritti	Beta	134
5	Victor Guerrero	Yamaha	126
10	Phillip McLaughlin	TM	83

Former EJ champ Joakim Ljunggren holds down fourth in Enduro 2



Spaniard Ivan Cervantes keeps hold of his E3 lead...



...despite Christophe Nambotin going 1-1 on the Gasser in Slovakia



Si Wakely gets in the points two times out of four in Finland and Slovakia

At the head of the Enduro 1 class, Honda-mounted Finn Mika Ahola is still the man to beat. Coming under increasing pressure from Husqvarna's Antoine Meo, Mika manages to win both days in Finland and Slovakia and remains 39 points clear. "Antoine pushed me hard in both Finland and Slovakia but I still managed to win. I guess I was a bit lucky but it keeps me in a strong place in the series."

Meo's strong results see him rise above Italian Simone Albergoni into second in the championship with the Frenchman's first E1 class win certainly not too far away. Finally showing what he's capable of, KTM's Eero Remes gets his first podium results of the season at his home GP with third on both days. Fast enough to win on day one, Remes finds things tough on day two following an opening day crash that injures his thumb.

For KTM's Johnny Aubert the '09 season continues to go from strength to strength. Muscling his way to two convincing class wins at the GP of Finland, in Slovakia he's made to work hard on day one as Husqvarna's Bartosz Oblucki pushes him all the way to the very end of the opening day. On day two Aubert is back out front and maintains his unbeaten season.

"Winning is great but winning when you have had to work really hard for it is the best," admits Johnny at the end of day one in

Slovakia. "It was hard with such slippery special tests but I did it. It means more than any of my other victories this season."

With Oblucki third on both days in Finland and then second on both days in Slovakia the Polish rider moves up to second in the E2 standings ahead of seven-time champion Juha Salminen on his BMW. Proving that two-strokes can certainly still mix it up at the sharp end of the E2 class, Bart ensures that Husky are well placed among the six different manufacturers that sit in the top six positions at the top of the class.

For the Brits the Finnish and Slovakian events don't go too well. E2 class Husqvarna privateer Si Wakely scores points on two of the four days and slides down the championship standings. "It's disappointing but I guess it happens in racing," comments Si.

With Spaniard Oriol Mena putting himself within striking distance of the Enduro Junior crown following three day wins and one runner-up finish, Irishman Phillip McLaughlin's hopes of rising up the championship standings are dealt two disappointing blows.

In Finland a collision with a rock puts him out on day two when headed towards a top six finish. But even worse is a bike problem on day two in Slovakia which, while he's holding down second in class, sees him fail to finish.

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RAGE



MIDTERM REPORT!

THE AWESOME FOURSOME THAT'S TOP OF THE CLASS

WATER CARRY ON!

JOSH WINS THE MXY2 TITLE – BUT HE CAN STILL LOSE IT AT FOXHILL...

LEWISTOMBS

Steven Smyth

Josh Waterman



WATERCARRY ON!

JOSH CLINCHES MXY2 CROWN – ALTHOUGH IT'S STILL HIS TO LOSE AT FOXHILL FINALE...

Congratulations to Josh Waterman – 2009 Maxxis MXY2 champion! 'One hand on the trophy' has been the popular soundbite quoted in most of the racing press recently but the fact is Josh has both hands firmly on the silverware and the title's in his back pocket. The only possible way he can lose it is by racing the final round at Foxhill – crazy but true! But more on that later as we kick off first with the third round action...

At the Hawkstone Park penultimate round of this year's Maxxis MXY2 series, 15-year-old PAR Honda star Luke Hawkins posted the fastest qualifying time just half-a-second to the good over Danger UK's Josh Waterman. Without so much as a hair's breadth between the two guys the big hope from most of the neutral watchers was for another shared points haul to set up a classic cliff-hanger at the Foxhill finale on July 26. It didn't go that way but the results still managed to conjure up a more than interesting situation for the final two races of the series.

On the question of who would blink first the answer came fairly quickly after the field blasted off down the Hawkstone tunnel at the start of race one. Josh flew past the electronic timer in front but Luke found himself picking the Honda out of the Shropshire sand. When Luke finally restarted he was in 39th place and already a lapped rider with no real chance of adding to his points total.

The maximum points pencilled in on Josh's card at the end of race one and the fatal no-score for Luke meant for the first time this season clear water existed between the two guys in the competition. Luke desperately needed a result second time out to effectively stay in the title hunt.

On the opening full circuit of moto two Luke set the fastest lap time of the race and put a sweet move on Waterman to take the lead. But again he bit the dirt shortly afterwards and ended the day with a totally blank scorecard. The worst possible day out for Luke then – but a glorious day in the sun for Josh with two race wins and a 50-point championship winning haul. In many ways the result this year delivered some

kind of poetic justice for Josh following the massive disappointment and frustration of last year's competition where he effectively lost the title at this very same third round stage with machine problems.

Sand specialist Ewan McClaren took full advantage on a circuit he loves to pull right up on the bumper of Luke in the championship stakes. His 5-2 race card was enough to secure third place overall on the day and move himself into a joint second position in the series with Luke. Both guys are now tantalisingly 50 points behind Josh with a final 50 points up for grabs at Foxhill.

So here's the scenario for the final round... We can't have a shared championship and Ewan can't win it – even if he takes both remaining moto wins he will still be down on Waterman's total of four race wins. Luke however can match that four race win total and if he were to take both races at Foxhill without Josh scoring points in the same races both guys would have identical championship scores and Luke would be champion.

Confused? Well here's what the rule book states. In the event of a tie on points and identical race scores throughout the competition the champion will be the rider who finished highest in the last race that both riders participated in. In effect then Josh Waterman is champion right now following Hawkstone Park without having to ride at Foxhill. But there are a set of circumstances that could yet result in Luke being champion. It's all as mad as a box of frogs...

The real battle in the cold light of day would now seem to be for the runner-up position with just 14 points covering the five riders behind Waterman. On the day in Shropshire there were other creditable performances from Matt Burrows who finished second in moto one and Michael McCammond whose two battling third place finishes gave him the number two berth on the end of day podium. And Steven Smyth's pair of fighting fourth places gave him fourth place overall on the day and fourth place in the championship standings.



Ewan McClaren

MXY2

Series Standings

1 Josh Waterman	144 points
2 Luke Hawkins	94
3 Ewan McLaren	94
4 Steven Smyth	93
5 Michael McCammond	83
6 Connor Walkley	80



Sid Evans



Conrad Mewse

BYMX

Series standings

Junior 65cc

1	Conrad Mewse	834 points
2	Henry Williams	755
3	Sid Evans	681
4	Connor Hughes	643
5	Will Keough	631
6	Jack Camwell	626

SW85cc

1	Ben Watson	842 points
2	Callan Cooper	762
3	Connor Clark	728
4	Tom Neal	715
5	Robert Davidson	647
6	Liam Knight	643

BW85cc

1	Ryan Houghton	774 points
2	Jake Millward	694
3	Sunny Thompson	686
4	Nathan Watson	671
5	Luke Norris	626
6	Ben Howell	604

Open

1	Josh Waterman	816 points
2	Jack Rowland	706
3	Dan McCanney	671
4	Connor Walkley	653
5	Ewan McClaren	610
6	Sean MacDonald	582

BYMXOK!

IT'S ALL GOING ON AS THE BYMX SERIES HEADS TO DEAN MOOR FOR ROUND FOUR

In the SW85s overall winner Callan Cooper snatched the two race wins that shattered Ben Watson's previously unbeaten BYMX record while Ryan Houghton could only finish fifth overall in the BW85s following his first mechanical problem of the season with Nathan Watson taking full advantage. And Danny McCanney in the Open class on borrowed machinery together with Sid Evans in the 65s both claimed classy individual race wins.

So incidents galore then making the headlines at Dean Moor for the fourth round of the BYMX series. With so much happening let's have a little look to see how it all affects the championship positions...

Although Conrad Mewse lost out in the final Junior 65cc race of the weekend in a great little scrap with Evans he amassed a further 222 points from his other four race wins. In the process Conrad has almost doubled his championship lead over Henry Williams to 79 points. Sid had his best BYMX weekend of the season with a resounding second place overall finish as Henry lost out to Connor Hughes in the battle for third overall. Interesting to note Conrad's lap times which were anything up to five seconds quicker than the 65cc field and good enough to be already worrying next year's crop of SW runners. And rapid enough to be beating half of the adult clubman class too.

Talking of lap times, the top three finishers in the SWs – Callan Cooper, Ben Watson and Connor Clark – were all banging in numbers that wouldn't have looked too far out of place in the in the upper ranks of the Big Wheel section. Ben had to give way to Callan on the top step of the podium but it barely affects the position at the head of the championship with just two points lost in fact as Ben scooped up the other three race wins. In third place overall on the weekend, Connor was the other major force claiming two storming second place finishes and pushing Ben and Callan all the way.

Ryan Houghton went to Cumbria with a 93-point lead in the BW champs and he left still comfortably in front with an 80-point lead, the downturn in championship points due almost



Jake Millward



Connor Clarke

entirely to a race one return of just 14 as a rear wheel puncture saw Ryan pushing the stricken KTM over the line with 29 riders going past.

But in race two Nathan Watson did the job totally fair and square, putting a move on Ryan from third place and then going on to take the race win. Nathan with three moto wins claimed his second Cumbrian national of the season and moved up into fourth place in the championship standings. The other race win went to Luke Norris as he powered home with a start-to-finish charge in race three.

In the absence of James Dunn who went 125cc two-stroke racing, Jake Millward continued his climb up the table and settled into second place with another set of impressive results – no worse than fourth in any race over the weekend and with a best finish of second in the opening moto. Jake Millward and Nathan Watson – most improved riders of the season? Has to be a pretty good shout right now.

In the Open section Danny McCanney had

the bit well and truly between his teeth to record his best result of the season with a 5-3-4-1-2 race card resulting in third place overall. Likewise Connor Walkley had his most impressive outing of the year as he lead races one, three and four before eventually being overturned. Good results every race however for the Kawasaki youngster and fourth overall for the weekend.

Both guys squeeze up on Jack Rowland in what is the battle for second place in the championship. As regards that one Luke Hawkins keeps the pressure right on with another race win, second overall on the weekend and now seventh in the championship. Hawkins to finish second in the final standings? He might just make it! Way out front, however, Josh Waterman continues to stretch his lead. Over the weekend Josh dropped just six points off a maximum total, recording three race wins and two seconds to extend his lead over Jack to 110 points.

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MIDTERMREPORT!

CAN ANYONE STOP THE AWESOME FOURSOME?

The awesome foursome! The quality quartet! Call them what you like – Conrad Mewse, Ben Watson, Ryan Houghton and Josh Waterman all started the season as red hot favourites to do well.

Right now at the midpoint all four of them are still well on course for silverware and it looks very much like come the autumn we will be calling them all champions and one of them will also surely be named as youth rider of the year.

Taking a shifty around for candidates who could possibly upset the odds and gatecrash the party isn't easy as there are definitely people on the pitch thinking that it's all over as far as winning the Junior 65cc, Small Wheel 85cc and the Open class titles go. Nathan Watson however in the Big Wheel 85s with his undoubted ability to blast through the card unbeaten tops the Rage list of potential party poopers.

Nathan could yet return a winning double of BYMX and Elite Youth Cup titles. It's well worth remembering if it hadn't been for a disastrous third round of the BYMX at Little Silver (two no-scores) and the controversial points deduction (Mildenhall round one) his quest to overturn Ryan at the top of the BYMX table would right now be the premier attraction in the ACU series.

Sunny Thompson is my other candidate for his results both here and in Holland. If he can up his game just slightly over the closing months of the season he too could end up as double or even triple champion. These six guys for me have been the real winners so far this year.

The biggest loser? I'd say the Open class races. With serious injuries taking out Bradley Pocock, James Hutchinson and Josh Spinks plus the retirement of Scot James, the top class has really suffered. Talking of suffering and injuries, cruel luck also for Aaron Pipon and Oliver Osmaston

as both guys crashed out while at the head of national championships. It's been that kind of season so far.

In the shadow of Ben Watson's magnificent winning exploits the SW85cc chase behind him has been absorbing to say the least. But just who has been best of the rest? In BYMX speak Callan Cooper is proving to be the top chaser, fully determined as ever and currently leading the charge. Following Callan's success at Dean Moor it will be really interesting to see how the next round unfolds at Cusses Gorse. Tom Neal, Connor Clark and Matthew Callaghan have also at times this season taken the fight close to Ben's rear wheel with Tom just about getting the vote right now as top chaser in the Elite series.

Taking a poll of paddock opinion on the two major youth series, the guys are all loving the Elite Youth Cup with all the tricked-up add-ons – especially the Red Bull Pro days. The five-race format across the board in both competitions however (EYC and BYMX) is not universally liked. The shout from most of the guys in the paddock is for longer races even if it means having less of them.

MIDTERMAWARDS

Mike's High Achievers

Rider of the Year Mid Term –

Conrad Mewse

Best Newcomer –

Sunny Thompson

Most Memorable Achievement –

the Watson Bros making history as they both went through the card unbeaten at EYC Haverigg

Unluckiest Rider –

Aaron Pipon for having his race bikes stolen then crashing out from the top of EYC 85cc standings

Innovation of the Year –

Red Bull Pro Day trickery

One to Watch –

Ben Howell

TOUGHCOOKIE!

AARON PIPON'S HAD A ROLLERCOASTER MONTH THAT'S LEFT THE LAD FROM JERSEY NURSING A BROKEN LEG – AND A DETERMINATION TO BOUNCE BACK...



If there's a rider who deserves a break this year it's Aaron Pipon – unfortunately, his break came in the form of a double fracture of the fibula and tibia.

After having both his bikes stolen just before the second Red Bull Elite Youth Cup at Haverigg he jumped on a borrowed bike and went out and won and got his hands on the championship leader's red plate. Then, only a few weeks later at the following round at Whitby, he was looking strong right up until he sustained his season-ending injury.

We put a call into Aaron at his home in Jersey to find out more...

DBR: So how are you feeling?

AP: "Not too bad, my leg is coming along nicely and there's no pain anymore and I'm over the disappointment a little more now."

DBR: You had a rollercoaster month or so didn't you?

AP: "The first round was good, I was fourth and happy with that. And then the Wednesday before Haverigg the bikes were stolen and I was gutted but I think that's what pumped me up for Haverigg. Matt from Evo-Tech was kind enough to lend me Jordan's [Dival] bikes which was amazing for a person I've never met before in my life to do that. I'm really thankful of that. Then I got to Whitby feeling great, I got my first pole in qualifying and my pace was getting quicker. I had a solid second and a third in the first two races and then in the third race I tried sweeping a corner to get close in on Ben Howell and that was it, I went down and obviously knew straight away it was over."

DBR: You've got an unusual set up haven't you because you live in Jersey – how does that work? Do you race there much?

AP: "I don't race in Jersey anymore, I just concentrate on the major races in the UK. I fly to England and then Vince Martin and his family look after me and take me racing with his son Rees who's in the Autos. I met Vince when our bike broke one time at a race and he stepped in and offered to help out and since then the Martin family have helped me out so much. They look after the bikes and do everything because since we moved to Jersey two years ago my dad is always so busy there. My family make it over when they can and were at Whitby."

DBR: I guess you're already planning your comeback?

AP: "Hell yeah! I'll be building up strength back into my leg once the plaster is off and taking my time and won't be back racing until the start of 2010 on the 250F. I'm a bit big for the 85 now anyway so I can take my time and get used to it properly. I could stay on an 85 for another year but I think that would only hold me back."

DBR: Is there anyone in particular that you try to base your style and technique on?

AP: "Ryan Villopoto. He hangs it out and is so aggressive. Not that I hang it out as much as him but I'd like too!"

DBR: Talking of American riders, have you ever been to the States?

AP: "No but I'd love to go and watch a SX or a National. I think it's a completely different sport out there with the atmosphere that they have. I'd love to be good enough to go there one day."

DBR: Have you got a particular rival that you have a lot of respect for?

AP: "Yeah, I'd say Ryan Houghton. He hasn't been riding the Elite this year but we've been rivals for years as we've come through from the 65s together when we were both slow and we've kind of progressed together and had some good battles back in the day."

GOT A STORY FOR RAGE?

Then contact our Youth Editor Mike Gurney at mikegurney55@yahoo.co.uk

THE STORY SO FAR...

BILLY SHOULD BE BATTLING FOR GP PODIUM FINISHES BUT INSTEAD OF RAKING IN THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS HE'S SAT AT HOME IN PLASTER!

Words by Billy MacKenzie Photo by Suttty

All right guys and gals? Hope you all liked my column last month – thought I'd try something a bit different and thanks to Suttty for the professional illustration too!

This month is standard issue because there's nothing to be pumped about at the moment and I'm guessing there's a lot of people wanting to know the inside gossip and what's really been going on for me to have such a bad season.

I'll keep my winter short as I've already written about that but basically from November until January I was solitude training with Kirk in the gym. Up at 7.30am every day, three hours training per day, running around in the snow and ice, swimming length after length, repetition after repetition of triceps, biceps, shoulders, abs, chest and legs. Gruelling but rewarding and I came out of the winter session feeling invincible! I felt so confident – my body had changed, my head was clear and I was ready to get on my bike.

Dobber had kept me from even sitting on a bike all winter so after two months with no motocross I was revving to go. I was actually having big arguments with Jamie about it – I wanted to ride my bike! I didn't like being told what to do so I went and bought a trials bike which I've only ridden once! Really showed him didn't!! It's for sale by the way if anyone wants one – Gas Gas 290 I think...

Then America rolled round so off I went, buzzing about riding! The whole month there went like clockwork and every single day I rode my bike – three motos every day, speed sprints, all building up. Running and gym each day too with the weekends off. It was hard work but I was enjoying it all. I'd go running but take detours and run more – I was like Forrest Gump...at Christmas...with Jenny in his arms...and a millions presents to open! Looking back maybe I was meant to stay out there for a bit longer? There was talk about spending another two weeks there but I'd killed my bike – blown it up with the amount of hours I put in on it – and I needed to come back to test the HRC bike...

I arrived back in Britain to find it completely covered in snow. I wasn't upset at all though – I was loving everything! Nothing could stop the happy little fluffy cloud I was on, nothing would bother me at all. I'd look at the positives from everything and decided to enjoy the snow instead of being bummed out I couldn't ride. So two weeks passed with no riding, then it was off to Mantova to test the factory bike. It was freezing over there the week after the international, the track was rough and it was a big change from t-shirt weather in the States. I got on with the job though, put in lap after lap to set my new bike up. I was getting back in the groove and really enjoying myself but on the last day I felt that twinge in my arm which would result in the tendonitis.

I didn't know what it was at first, I thought I'd just pulled a muscle with the weather being cold and stuff so I just left it to get better, kept working hard in the gym, kept trying to ride until one day it was way too painful and I realised it wasn't going away. I only found out it was tendonitis a couple days before the Hawkstone International, then Canada Heights rolled up and I had some steroid injection the Friday before the race to heal it up. It kinda worked but now I was having to completely rest it – no gym, no bike, nothing. I came to the next round at Langrish having done no riding during the week again and with it still lurking under my skin.

Langrish went well considering. I was riding strong, I felt switched on, the tendonitis had dulled down a bit and I was back where I thought I should be – up front and leading the second race! I got all the way to the last hill before my brain decided I should endo my bike and smash myself in before the chequered flag. In the process I managed to break a rib and I was back to where I was – one step forward and two steps back!

So again it was back to square one – rest up, no riding, do what training you can I was told. The first three GPs were coming up, I still hadn't been able to do a 40-minute moto since I returned from the States and I still had to set my bike up and there was no time to do it. It had been two months since I stepped off the plane from California and I hadn't been able to get any real bike time and now I was struggling to do any decent work or circuits in the gym. I was getting

worried now but had to keep trying in the hope that it'd all fall into place sooner or later.

Faenza was next – and first free practice I went pole!

Now even though it was a good lap I really didn't expect it – I'd had such a crap couple of months with no bike time, crashes and injuries, then at the first GP of the year I come out and go pole! But then the weekend got wrote off with the rain and I was still on painkillers all weekend too. But I put that race down to it being a lottery with the rain, making an excuse for my brain pretty much, still trying to look on the positive side of things.

Bulgaria and Turkey were a total nightmare! I was still on painkillers and stuff but my ribs weren't hurting too bad. I just had no bike time at all! I still hadn't set my bike up, I was just guessing going into each weekend, pretty much doing what testing we could on the weekend to get set up for the track. But I was just uncomfortable, I didn't know what the bike would do, I wasn't confident in my riding knowing I'd done no practising. I was trying my hardest but whatever results I got were purely down to my natural ability to ride a bike, defo not my preparation!

I struggled my way round Turkey, just feeling alien on the bike – I tried for a fast lap time in qualifying and ended up high-siding massive down the track and twisting my ankle. The ankle wasn't a big deal as I've done it before but I had defo stretched the ligament too far and the tiniest little twist made me wanna cry! However, I didn't feel it in the race at Turkey – it was the week after when I went riding to Apex in the mud. Twice I twisted it.

I had talked with Dobber about everything and we came to make a plan that Steve Henderson would be my practice mechanic after Turkey. Steve is really cool and has been in the game a long time – he helped me a few times back in '07 so it was cool to finally get back on the bike and riding during the week. My ankle wasn't too bad now so from Turkey til Valkenswaard Steve was with me while I busted out 40-minute motos almost every day for two weeks solid to get all the bike time back that I'd missed. I started to feel good on the bike again and I went over to Belgium and finally set my bike up before Valkenswaard. Read back on my column after Valkenswaard to know the story as I've said it all before...

Can't be arsed pulling out your back issue? Okay, I'll run through it quickly. I qualified second. Felt confident. Got nervous again on race day. Lead the opening race but got tired with seven minutes to go. Went back to eighth. Got dreadful start in race two. Crashed with Ken De Dycker in the first turn. Got back up. Pushed through. Passed Cairoli. Got cleaned out by a pretty pissed off Ken who thought I'd nailed him on purpose. Finished 14th. Went to Portugal feeling positive for a podium.

Okay, so now you're up to speed let's pick up the tale again...

So everything was on a high now, my bike was awesome, I had showed myself I'm still capable of being at the front, my injuries were gone and I was ready to rock again. I was loving it just like I was in America. I was putting some seriously hard work in during the week because I had showed myself I can be at the front with only two weeks riding and now I had my sights back to where they were in the off-season. Firmly set on winning!

I felt so good on the bike and the practices in Agueda had me near the front. I like the track in Portugal so there was no doubt in my mind now – I only wanted to be first or on the podium. I went for a pre-qualifying lap and was two seconds quicker on the first section than anyone, only to throw it away on a slick left-hander and do my thumb in – which has lead to this moment.

I've had an operation, I'm in a cast, sat at home on the f*****g computer, typing my column! Arggggggggggghhhhhh!

Billy MacKenzie



$B, I, L, L_1, Y_4, M_2/A, C$

A person is shown from the waist up, wearing a Thor motorcycle jersey and pants. The jersey is white with black and grey accents and has the 'thor' logo on the chest. The pants are black with white and grey accents and have a large Thor logo on the side. The person is also wearing Thor gloves. The background is dark with large, faint, concentric circles.

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